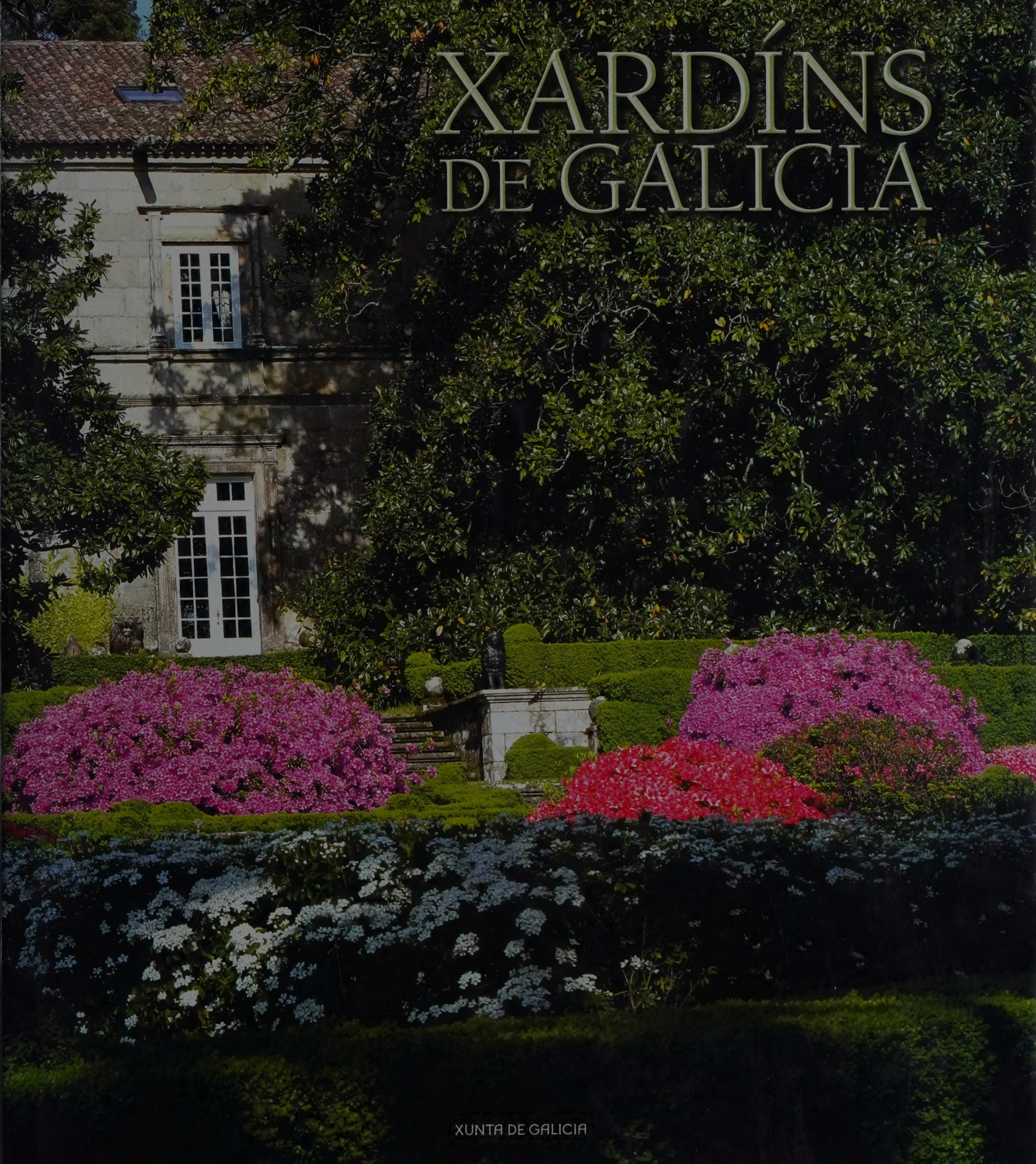


XARDÍNS DE GALICIA

XUNTA DE GALICIA

© 2007 Lunwerg Editores
© do texto: os seus autores
© das fotografías: os seus autores

Deseño gráfico: Miguel Ángel Palleiro
Tradución galego: María J. Lojo Abeijón
Tradución inglés: Michael Bunn, Charles Paxton

Creación, produción e realización Lunwerg Editores.
Reservados todos os dereitos.
Prohibida a reprodución total ou parcial sen a debida autorización.

ISBN: 978-84-9785-246-3
Depósito legal: B-6473-2007

LUNWERG EDITORES
BARCELONA: Beethoven, 12 - 08021 Barcelona - Tel. 93 201 59 33 - Fax 93 201 15 87
MADRID: Luchana, 27 - 28010 Madrid - Tel. 91 593 00 58 - Fax 91 593 00 70
MÉXICO: Callejón de la Rosa, 23 - Tlacopac, San Ángel - 01060 México, D.F. - Tel./Fax (52-55) 5662 5746
E-mail: lunwerg@lunwerg.com

Impreso en España

XARDÍNS DE GALICIA

Introdución

JOSÉ MARÍA BERMEJO

Textos

MARÍA EUGENIA RUIZ DE AZCÁRATE

Fotografías dos xardíns

LUIS CARRÉ

Fotografías da cociña

SACHA HORMAECHEA

LUNWERG EDITORES

XUNTA DE GALICIA
CONSELLERÍA DE INNOVACIÓN E INDUSTRIA

TURGALICIA
Dirección Xeral de Turismo

Sumario

Xardíns galegos: outra versión do paraíso 9
José María Bermejo

Os Xardíns
María Eugenia Ruiz de Azcárate

Quinteiro da Cruz 14
Oca 34
Pazo da Ribeira 56
Pegullal 70
Trasouto 88
Pazo de la Golpelleira 104
O xardín de Esperante 124
Fefiñáns 138
Sigrás 158
Jaz 180
Santa Cruz de Ribadulla 198
Rubiáns 218

As Receitas

Caldo galego 30
Empanada crocante de xoubas, embutido e *foie* 34
Manuel Chaves

Pastel de centola e ourizos 52
Lombo de mero con feixóns e allada galega 54
Eduardo Pardo

Peixe sapo asado, arroz cremoso de polbo e *carpaccio* de polbo 66
Ensalada de centolo, xelatina de tomate e pan de millo 68
Xoán Crujeiras

Gazpacho, sorbete de sandía e lagostino mariñado con herba luísa 84
Taco de bonito sobre crema de *marmitako* e mosaico de verduras 86
Miguel A. Campos

Bonito mariñado 100
Moega de tenreira, uvas e queixo San Simón 102
Rafael Centeno

Rulo de corzo, crema de nabo e salsa de P. X. 120
Perdiz en escabeche con pementos asados e vinagreta de níscaros 122
Héctor López

Tomate *Kinder* 134
Salmón, alga, herbas e conservas en vinagre 136
Marcelo Tejedor

Cacheira tostada con crema de cabaza e soia 156
Polbo con crema de pemento e mexillón á alfábega 178
Javier González

Ostras con emulsión de limón e xenxibre 194
Requeixo das Neves e tomate nunha pequena ensalada 196
Pepe Solla

Tostas de lacón, padróns e queixo de Arzúa 214
Vieiras rustridas con cogomelos de temporada e cabaza en escabeche 216
Javier Rodríguez «Taki»

Crocantes de tomiño 234
Salmonetes de roca con cachelos e os seus figadiños encebolados 236
Xosé T. Cannas

English Translation 239

Xardíns galegos
outra versión do paraíso

Imaxe e resumo do mundo, o xardín sostén –na súa fraxilidade cambiante e na súa vitalidade renovadora– a nosa nostalxia do Edén perdido. O xardín é, ao mesmo tempo, natureza e cultura. Por iso, a «Carta de Florencia» (1982) define o xardín histórico como «monumento vivo»: non só en si mesmo, polas plantas que seguen o seu ciclo evolutivo, polo tempo que pasa ou polas gradacións de luz que o fan diferente a cada instante, senón tamén polo impulso de creatividade que o ser humano puxo nel. Un xardín é, en certo modo, un soño materializado de auga e ceo, vexetación, cor, son, aroma, sabor a terra, pedra, memoria…; pero revela, ao mesmo tempo, unha personalidade diferenciada: a do espazo que o acolle; a da cultura que o anima. Aquí falamos dos xardíns de Galicia, ligados, en gran parte, aos pazos, á súa historia, á súa arquitectura, á súa organización socio-económica, á súa identidade ambigua pero rotunda. E falamos –como non– dunha paisaxe mítica.

O campo verde e o mar prateado definen o espazo galego, reavivado pola humidade constante, por un ceo que alterna a néboa e o orballo co azul máis puro. Desde o interior montañoso, sucado por mil ríos, ata o litoral suave das Rías Baixas ou das Mariñas ou o litoral abrupto da Costa da Morte, Galicia revélasenos como un país verde, morno e chuvioso, marcado pola supremacía da Natureza.

A gradación do relevo vaise definindo, de abaixo para arriba, por terras baixas de val e litoral, suaves bocarribeiras, montes ondulados e serras poderosas. O mar, os ríos, a chuvia e o paso do tempo foron moldeando o relevo granítico e as constantes dunha paisaxe atlántica marcada, á súa vez, por unha intensa actividade humana.

O relevo –accidentado pero suave, con numerosos microclimas– e o ambiente morno e chuvioso, contribuíron a configurar un hábitat de pequenas aldeas dispersas e próximas, un espazo de convivencia enraizado nunha lingua propia –de rica e intensa transmisión oral– e nunha cultura de fortes connotacións máxico-relixiosas.

Eses valores subsisten en gran parte, a pesar do vertixinoso proceso de transformación social, inevitable e ata necesario, aínda que contraditorio, que esixe un equilibrio entre a Galicia ensimesmada e a Galicia aberta. A arquitectura autóctona e a propia paisaxe son dous elementos especialmente sensibles nos que se xoga o ser ou non ser da identidade galega. A arquitectura popular, sabiamente adecuada ás condicións xeoclimáticas e socioculturais, persiste en casas, *pallozas*, *hórreos*, *muíños*, *fornos*, *pesqueiras*, *pombais*, *telleiras*, *alvarizas*, *palleiras* e *alpendres*. Na súa marabillosa variedade revélase o talento intuitivo dunha «arquitectura sen arquitectos», que combina a máxima funcionalidade coa perfecta integración na paisaxe. Noutro nivel, e con valores semellantes de funcionalidade e adecuación ao medio, os pazos constitúen unha das marcas máis significativas do patrimonio cultural galego: non só pola súa tipoloxía arquitectónica, que abarca a casa e as construcións auxiliares (*adegas*, *hórreos*, *faiados*, *tullas*, *alpendres*, *cabazos*, *invernadoiros*, *muíños*, etc.), senón tamén polos xardíns, parques e terras de cultivo que resumen a riqueza botánica, propia ou foránea, do país.

A cultura dos pazos, que acadou o seu esplendor no século XVIII, ten a súa orixe nos vellos señoríos e é unha extensión da «casa grande» ou da «casa-fortaleza». Ana Pereira Molares propón esta definición de «pazo»: «casa fidalga galega edificada no campo, posuidora de signos heráldicos, de proporcións e feituras suntuarias moi superiores ás do hábitat normal da zona e que presenta, non sempre pero si moi frecuentemente, portón brasonado, capela, pombal, xardíns, etc. E que cronoloxicamente pertence aos séculos XVII e XVIII, malia que poida posuír unha orixe anterior ou adicións de épocas posteriores».

A palabra *pazo*, derivada da palabra latina «palatium», aínda que de uso tardío, suxire o seu rango señorial e residencial, pero, en moitos casos, engloba as características da explotación agropecuaria, combinando a arquitectura residencial e a arquitectura complementaria ligada a unha eco-

nomía autosuficiente, e, no ámbito vexetal, os espazos axardinados –máis próximos ao palacio ou á casa grande– e a vexetación produtiva (viñas, hortas, prados ou bosques). A pesar da súa etimoloxía, o pazo carece de pretensións arquitectónicas, e os escasos adornos de arcadas ou terrazas relaciónanse máis coa luz e coa toma do sol que coa ostentación. Con frecuencia, a marca de nobreza concéntrase en algúns detalles moi concretos: o grosor dos muros, as grandes escalinatas exteriores, as chemineas de gran tamaño (ás veces con reloxos de sol) e, sobre todo, os escudos de liñaxe –no centro da fachada, na porta principal de acceso, na capela, nas fontes, nos muros ou «balados» que marcan o límite da propiedade, e mesmo tallados en buxo. En calquera caso, arquitectura e paisaxe forman un todo indisociable, como revela o dito popular: «Pombal, capela e ciprés, pazo é». Podemos rastrexar a súa orixe nas vilas romanas, nas torres defensivas e nos pazos medievais, con influencias posteriores da arquitectura campesiña e monástica, as vilas do renacemento italiano e o pazo barroco. Ángel del Campo resume a tipoloxía dos pazos en catro categorías fundamentais: 1) caserón entre torres de orixe medieval con ás traseiras que inclúen un patio de función utilitaria (por exemplo, Vista Alegre, en Vilagarcía, de Pontevedra); 2) construción en forma de U, formada por tres edificios e frecuentemente por un valado con portada que acostuma amosar brasón (Vilar de Ferreiros, en Santiago, A Coruña); 3) edificio de dúas ás en ángulo recto, enmarcando un xardín (Oca, cerca da Estrada, en Pontevedra, é o exemplo máis sobresaínte, rematado en 1746 sobre un núcleo de fins do século xv), e 4) caserón de bloque sólido (Bóveda, en Lugo, con fachada de galería de arcadas, de 1772). En xeral, podemos citar algunhas características comúns: planta rectangular, grosos muros de granito, disposición en dúas plantas, cruxías e entaboados de castaño, soportais en planta baixa e galerías ou solainas na planta superior, cubertas de escaso voo a catro augas e denso contorno vexetal.

Os avatares políticos e as transformacións sociais foron alterando os usos ou ameazando a mera supervivencia deses espazos singulares. A cultura palaciana, coas súas luces e sombras, extinguiuse, practicamente, nas primeiras décadas do século xix, coa transformación do pazo en mera residencia, pero subsisten, aínda, algúns valores patrimoniais –arquitectónicos e paisaxísticos– que é preciso coidar como legado importante da memoria colectiva.

A xardinería é un dos elementos máis suxestivos e fascinantes dos pazos galegos: non só pola súa orixinalidade e a súa variedade, senón tamén pola súa relación co contorno paisaxístico e pola beleza cambiante, asociada co paso das estacións e co porte, as tonalidades e as formas das plantas, sen esquecer a presenza da auga, os elementos ornamentais de pedra labrada (estanques, fontes, fervenzas, estatuas, balaustradas, escalinatas, *miradoiros*, *coadores*, etc.), e, por suposto, a fauna. As aves alegran co seu canto este microcosmos: pardais, lavandeiras brancas, merlos, urracas, córvidos, rulas, pombas, pimpíns, reiseñores, xiríns, ferreiriños, paxariñas escribanas, vencellos, andoriñas, petos reais, gabeadores, etc. As bolboretas zigzaguean entre a froresta, como nerviosas fadas de luz, e as ras mergúllanse nas pozas apartadas e sombrías. Todo –o grande e o pequeno– convive nestes espazos de felicidade.

No libro «Árboles Monumentales en el Patrimonio Cultural de Galicia», Carlos Rodríguez Dacal e Jesús Izco descóbrennos algunhas marabillas: o «Avó de Chavín» (un eucalipto de case 70 metros), no Souto da Retorta (Viveiro); os castiñeiros de Costa e de Pombairiños, en terras ourensás, cuxos troncos alcanzan un perímetro de ata 12 metros. Árbores con máis de 500 anos –como o carballo do pazo lucense de Cartelos, os castiñeiros do Bosque de Pombariños (Ourense) ou a «sobreira» de Balboa, na Estrada (Pontevedra)– e árbores tan raras coma a laranxeira hermafrodita do pazo coruñés de Brandariz, en Ortigueira… (No século XVIII, frei Martín Sarmiento –notario dilixente da flora galaica– anotou, entre outras curiosidades, que os loureiros plantados xunta os limoeiros os mantiñan frondosos, verdes e produtivos durante moitos anos).

Desde os pazos de *beiramar* divísanse, entre o verdor, os reflexos mariños, coas súas máxicas metamorfoses, a cabalo entre o eterno e o efémero. O xardín dos pazos –evolución refinada das hortas orixinais– evoca tamén os primeiros xardíns interiores e as extensas hortas dos grandes mosteiros galegos (Samos, Oseira, Sobrado dos Monxes ou San Martiño Pinario), e responde a unha tipoloxía variada, en función do emprazamento, clima, o relevo, o espazo, os usos e a inspiración, con influencias da xardinería francesa –máis xeométrica– ou do paisaxismo inglés –máis libre e natural–, pero con personalidade propia. En opinión de José A. Martín Curty, as pautas que definen a xardinería palaciana son: illamento, compartimentación, aterrazamento e eclecticismo. A verde campiña litoral realza a personalidade e a beleza destes

xardíns, que, con frecuencia, superan en prestancia á propia vivenda, con árbores maxestosas, como cedros do Atlas (*Cedrus Atlantica*) ou a súa variedade (*Cedrus atlantica 'glauca'*), cedros do Líbano (*Cedrus Libani*), abetos do Cáucaso (*Abies dordmanniana*), abetos gregos (*Abies cephalonica*), teixos (*Taxus baccata*), criptomerias (*Cryptomeria japonica*), palmeiras canarias (*Phoenix canariensis*), araucarias (*Araucaria heterophylla*), magnolios (*Magnolia grandiflora*), tileiros prateados (*Tilia tomentosa*), ou plátanos de sombra (*Platanus acerifolia*), ou con especies tan peculiares coma o rododendro do Ponto (*Rhododendron ponticum*), o ligustro lustroso de China (*Ligustrum acidum*), ou tan características coma o carballo (*Quercus robar*), o carballo albar (*Quercus petrae*), o castiñeiro (*Castanea sativa* ou *Castanea vulgaris*), o loureiro (*Laurus nobilis*), o loureiro real (*Prunas laurocerasus*), o érbedo (*Arbutus unedo*), o acivro (*Ilex aquifolium*), o magnolio (*Magnolia grandiflora*), o evónimo (*Evonymus*), o celindo (*Philadelphus coronarius*), a laranxeira (*Citrus aurantius*), o limoeiro (*Citrus limon*), o salgueiro chorón (*Salix babilónica*), a «bola de neve» (*Viburnum opulus «Sterile»*), a hortensia (*Hydrangea macrophylla*), o buxo (*Buxus sempervirens*) que enmarca os espazos, ou a camelia (*Camellia japonica*), a raíña exótica dos xardíns galegos, que mereceu o nome de «flor das Rías Baixas», aínda que a súa presenza se estende a outras zonas atlánticas de Galicia.

A sensación de «eterna primavera», mesmo nos meses de inverno, explícase pola frondosidade vexetal, sostida pola humidade do ambiente ou polos cursos de auga, e pola implantación de especies que permanecen verdes todo o ano ou as que, sabiamente mesturadas, aseguran unha floración sucesiva, escasa e matizada, que se vai relevando. As árbores de folla caduca e a abundante hedra poñen unha nota romántica nos días de outono.

Na comarca pontevedresa do Ulla, o Pazo de Oca é coñecido como «o Versalles galego», sobre todo polo seu belísimo xardín interior, vivificado –coma todo o pazo– polo regueiro Badoucos. Todo é aquí delicia: os bordos de buxo, mirándose nas augas dos estanques ou bordeando a fonte de granito, coa súa orixinal forma lobulada; a gran ría canalizada que se bifurca baixo a ponte; o fulgor das hortensias; o longo paseo dos tileiros; a branca galería; o vello lavadoiro, as camelias, cuxos pétalos cobren os camiños de inverno (entre elas, unha camelia centenaria de 15 metros de altura)…

O pazo coruñés de Mariñán, asomado á Ría de Betanzos e ás ribeiras do Mandeo, é outro dos espazos singulares, co seu acceso de plátanos de sombra –de ata 50 metros de altura–, castiñeiros de Indias e eucaliptos; a súa avenida de camelias antigas e de piceas (falso abeto), e, xa no corazón do xardín barroco, o seu parterre de buxo –obra mestra da topiaria ornamental– e as súas marabillas vexetais, abertas ao aire salino: buxos, teixos, érbedos, plátanos de sombra, cipreses de Portugal, chopos negros, freixos do maná… O pequeno xardín do embarcadoiro ou balcón da ría evoca, na súa íntima sensualidade, a lenda dos amores furtivos de dona Constanza, filla do poderoso Gómez Pérez das Mariñas.

O pazo de Lourizán, tamén en terras de Pontevedra, ofrece –ademais do aire romántico da súa reconstrución a finais do século XIX sobre un edificio do século XV–, a sorpresa dun inmenso predio forestal que rememora a estrutura da explotación agropecuaria, con espazos ben diferenciados (o xardín, a finca e o parque natural), xuntando a investigación forestal, a arte da xardinería e a natureza primixenia. A estrutura reitérase noutros espazos semellantes, como o Pazo de Ortigueira –máis coñecido como Pazo de Santa Cruz de Ribadulla (Pontevedra)– ou o conxunto de Castrelos, en Vigo, que inclúe o pazo barroco –hoxe museo Quiñones de León–, os xardíns históricos (roseira, xardín francés, xardín inglés), o bosque, o arboredo e unha parte do Paseo de Lagares. Neste conxunto de Castrelos –con viveiro, pombal e auditorio–, hai que destacar, a glicinia de entrada ao xardín francés e á Pradera do Té, o Paseo de Odriozola, con dobre fila de camelias, e, unha vez máis, a corrente vivificadora dun regueiro: o Lagares.

Hai outros espazos singulares que merecen ser coñecidos e gozados: por exemplo, os xardíns públicos de Possío, en Ourense; e, na provincia da Coruña –ademais do xardín de Méndez Nuñez, na capital–, o Xardín histórico-artístico de Padrón; A Ferradura, en Santiago de Compostela, e O Pasatempo, en Betanzos, rico en flora americana, deseñado a principios do século XX, seguindo os modelos italianos do Renacemento (en especial, o do xardín de Bomarzo), cunha dobre intención: recreativa e didáctica.

As camelias, os rododendros, as azaleas e as acacias «dealbatas» poñen o seu toque floral na relativa monocromía do inverno e as súas flores perduran ata o inicio da primavera, cando aínda son escasas as especies ornamentais floridas. Se houbera que elixir unha flor, como cifra e selo dos xardíns palacianos, esa sería, sen dúbida, a camelia: bela, fráxil, romántica. Jesús Izco, que a considera un «don de deus», escribe: «Na competencia entre buxo e camelia, esta triunfou sen discusión. A substitución é explicable dada a enorme desigualdade entre ambas especies na súa follaxe e nas súas flores, con vantaxe para a camelia en todos os casos. Durante o outono e o inverno as súas grandes follas brillan lustro-

sas coa chuvia, e as súas copas cállanse de flores vermellas, encarnadas, rosas, viñosas, violetas ou brancas inmaculadas, ou variegadas, que se multiplican en gran número de formas: plenas, semidobres, dobres, peonia, anémona. Flores que resaltan sobre o verde escuro das copas, como luciñas de cor, segundo se cantou no verso…»

Relativamente tardía, pois introduciuse en Galicia a mediados do século XIX, procedente de Portugal –que a importara das Indias Orientais–, a camelia aparece escasamente na literatura galega, aínda que é citada por Emilia Pardo Bazán, Curros, Pondal, Rosalía de Castro, Wenceslao Fernández Flórez, Ruibal ou Álvaro Cunqueiro, que escribiu unha *Laude da camelia*. O delicado madrigal que Federico García Lorca dedicou a Santiago de Compostela comeza así:

Chove en Santiago
meu doce amor.
Camelia branca do ar
brilla entebrecida ao sol.

Na poesía xaponesa –sobre todo no *haiku*– é unha das flores máis celebradas. Kyoshi (1874-1959) expresa, nun dos seus poemas máis coñecidos, a fraxilidade da beleza ou –se se quere– o rico da perfección fuxitiva:

a camelia
plenamente florida
é xa algo fea…

(Quizais por iso, para o *ikebana* da cerimonia do té se acostuma coller, un pouco antes, unha camelia entrecerrada, aínda con orballo…)

O pazo de Santa Cruz de Ribadulla presume de ter os exemplares de *Camellia japonica* máis vellos de Galicia, privilexio que se acostuma outorgar, erradamente, á «Oranda-Ko» de Castrelos polo seu porte espectacular. No pazo de Oca, a xoia é a *Camellia reticulata* «Captain Rawes», non só pola súa floración espectacular, senón tamén por ser unha das máis antigas da súa especie en Europa. Á entrada do pazo de Torres-Agrelo (Redondela) hai unha *Camellia sansaqua* de 9 metros de alto e 1,40 de perímetro, e na Terraza da Fonte, outras dúas multitroncais aínda máis altas (de 11,50 e 12 metros, respectivamente). No conxunto, destaca o cultivar «Barón de Soutelinho», de flores rosas e olorosas. Os xardíns do castelo de Soutomaior, rehabilitados a partir de 1982, contan cunha fabulosa colección, pero o pazo Torre de Lama alberga a maior plantación de camelias de Europa, cunhas 400 variedades.

O valor destes xardíns, hortas, bosques e prados é inmenso – na súa dimensión material e espiritual–. Paga a pena coidalos e preservalos, non só por si mesmos senón polo que significan. Lembremos, por exemplo, que na Comunidade galega hai 404 especies de flora e fauna en situación de ameaza, das cales e 59 están en perigo de extinción (entre elas, algunhas variedades de libélulas, o sapoconcho europeo, a galiña de monte ou o oso, e, entre as plantas, a herba de namorar, o lirio de monte ou o crisantemo).

Os xardíns galegos participan do impulso barroco xerado no século XVIII, con claro predominio da simetría versallesca, aínda que dotados dunha personalidade inconfundible, capaces de integrar –como en Ortigueira– o xeométrico e o paisaxístico, o artificial e o natural, a flora nativa e a exótica. A presenza da auga –visible ou invisible–, a pedra granítica –avellentada polo tempo e embelecida polo verdor orgánico de liques e musgos– e, por suposto, as plantas, avivaron a creatividade, moitas veces anónima, dos xardineiros. Un xardín non é só deseño: é, sobre todo, a alma, o aire que o vivifica e o fai, en certo modo, único.

José María Bermejo

Quinteiro da Cruz
entrelazado de camelias

Quinteiro da Cruz estala de cor en pleno inverno cando grandes ronchas amarelas, brancas, vermellas... iluminan as reviravoltas da follaxe. O xardín deixa entón translucir un intricado labirinto de paseos. De escaleiras de pedra e de escondedoiros que constitúen a esencia dun xardín que non é posible captar á primeira.

Un auténtico entrelazado de camelias que se esparexen suspendidas das sebes tan frías e delicadas como a propia luz de inverno. E o xardín cambia con elas a medida que cambian de cor e procedencia. 1.400 variedades polo menos que administran amodo a súa historia e a súa lenda.

Veñen de Vietnam, de China, do Xapón. Aclimátanse e quedan. Todo un alarde de botánica e beleza que se distribúe ao longo da finca en forma de altos muros de verdor ata dar nun xardín interior decorado con fornelas de flores, coma se fosen as paredes dun salón. Un recinto certamente abafador duns seis metros de altura.

O xardín descende despois, pola costa sempre en función das sebes de camelias que van debuxando currunchos e vereas. Un trazado antigo que conforma, non obstante, un xardín novo, dando fe da extraordinaria exuberancia desta terra. Un verdadeiro viveiro decorado que acepta cada día, novas plantas sen protestas. Ata dar co límite do bosque, –un bosque autóctono de piñeiros e de carballos–, a finca é un escaparate de camelias, rododendros e azaleas. Frondosa e feraz; ninguén diría que ten pouco más de 30 anos de existencia. O conxunto ofrece un aspecto coidadosamente renovado. Puxante. Fontes, bancos e mesas de pedra. O toque tropical dunha araucaria que remata nun airoso penacho de ramaxe.

Na espesura, unha capela que houbo de reconstruírse pedra a pedra a partir dos restos dunha do século XVI, asómase un panorama de viñedos. Unha pérgola cuberta de xasmín. O manchón outonal das hortensias. Dous hórreos e un cruceiro poñen por fin o contrapunto galego no conxunto que é sobre todo un xardín que espera.

Ás camelias.

Caldo galego

Ingredientes

100 g de patacas
1 mallada de grelos
50 g de fabas
1 chourizo
30 g de unto
½ dl de aceite de oliva
200 g de touciño entrefebrado celta
Nata
Auga
Sal

Elaboración

Coller unha tarteira, na que meteremos a cocer todos os ingredientes, cubrir o dobre coa auga en frío e cocer durante 1 hora e 45 minutos a lume medio. Mentres, imos facendo uns crocantes con chourizo e touciño entrefebrado, para o que cortamos láminas finas no curtafriames e introducímolas no forno a temperatura suave de 120 ºC ata que estean crocantes. Unha vez cocidos todos os ingredientes, separámolos e reservamos o caldo da cocción.

O seguinte paso é facer un puré coas patacas e cun pouco de aceite de oliva virxe, nata e algo do caldo da cocción.

Por outro lado, facemos outro puré cos grelos, un pouco de pataca e unhas fabas e reservámolo.

Presentación

Nunha copa de cóctel, dispoñemos o aperitivo da seguinte maneira: na parte de abaixo servimos un pouco de puré de pataca. A continuación, o puré de grelos, unhas fabas e inxerimos os crocantes nos purés. Rematamos cunhas gotas de aceite de chourizo por riba das fabas.

Manuel Chaves

Empanada crocante de xoubas, embutido e *foie*

Ingredientes

200 g de masa follada
1 ovo batido
Auga

Para o recheo

1 cebola
½ chourizo
100 g de xamón
100 g de touciño entrefebrado
1 dl de viño branco (albariño ou ribeiro)
8 xoubiñas
2 pementos vermellos asados
100 g de *foie gras* de pato

Elaboración

Cortamos a masa follada da forma desexada, xa sexa triangular, cadrada ou redonda, e colocámola nunha placa de forno. Pintamos por riba uns anaquiños con ovo batido, metémolos no forno a 180 ºC durante 20 minutos e reservámolos.

A continuación, picamos a cebola en paisana fina, así coma o resto de ingredientes do recheo, rustrimos a cebola ata o punto de caramelización, engadimos o resto dos ingredientes ao gusto, cociñámolos cun pouco de viño branco e reservámolo tamén.

Agora tócalle a quenda ás xoubiñas, que limpamos de raspas e vísceras. Por último, asamos o pemento vermello, pelámolo e triturámolo co seu aceite.

Presentación

Collemos unha peza de masa follada e abrímola pola metade. Enchémola coa cebola e o embutido, e facemos o mesmo coas demais. Dispoñemos enriba as xoubiñas e metemos a bandexa no forno ata que se cociñen as xoubas durante 2 ou 3 minutos.

Terminamos sacando a bandexa do forno. Poñemos encima das xoubas unas lascas de *foie* e taparemos ca tapa de masa follada.

Dispoñemos un debuxo co puré de pementos asados e empratamos a empanada.

Manuel Chaves

Oca
demasiado belo para ser descrito

Demasiado belo para ser descrito, o xardín do pazo de Oca debería percorrerse sempre en carruaxe; con palafreneiros de librea e seis cabalos.

En carroza dourada de principio e logo en landó acharoado. Só así, de perruca e calzón curto nos inicios, ou tocado de chistera en adiante, se podería non desentoar coa paisaxe.

A realidade non obstante, incorre na poesía. Non queda outro remedio que renderse. En tres séculos de existencia, o barroco, o neoclásico e o romántico sucédense e conviven ao arrolo das fontes. Do aire azulado e do brillo das flores.

Non hai remedio. A poesía insiste en impoñerse. Interfire e asenta os seus reais onde quere. Empéñase en navegar polos regueiros e axústase á cadencia das augas. Romanticona, desmedida; coma elas. Acompaña a serpe de buxo que conduce ao destino fatal do labirinto. Infíltrase entre os tileiros; agáchase tralas sebes. E vólvese ao fin, maxestosa e formal nos estanques onde nada un pato forasteiro abafado de lirismo.

Acaba de chegar e nótaselle. Pasa lento, contemplando pasmado o panorama: a illa, os floróns de hortensias, a ponte das Troitas, os canóns: debe de estar considerando se quedarse.

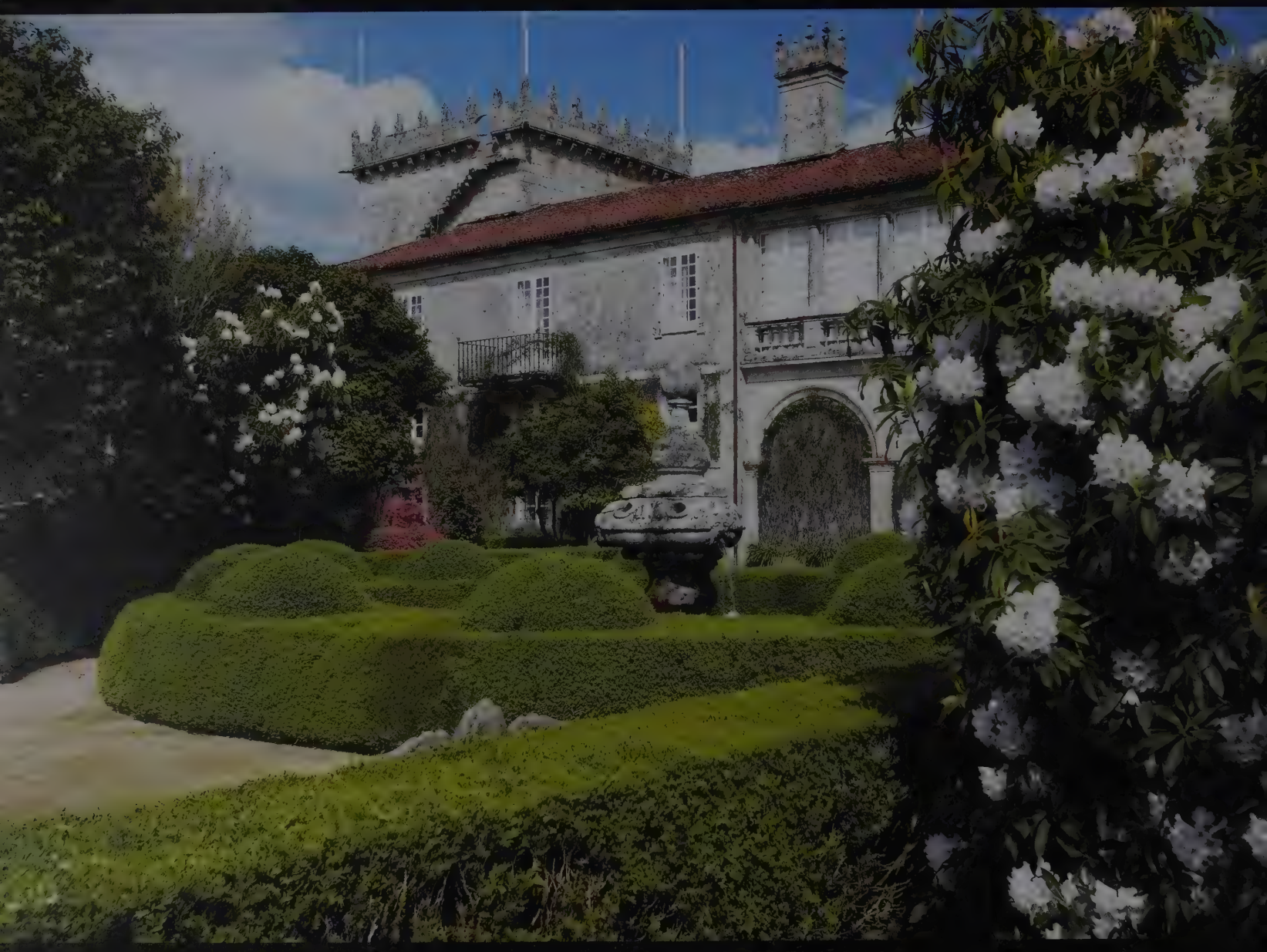
O contorno non pode ser máis elegante: un ceo que é puro Tintoretto, balaustradas de granito case prata. Escalinatas, estatuas. E a auga que se afasta tenue e plácida.

O xardín adopta agora, un ton versallesco, de horta decorada: viveiro de buxos e de rosas que conviven en paz, con apios coles e pementos. Kiwis que se remontan ao século XVIII, viñedos centenarios. E nun encadre que non pode ser máis clásico, unhas ocas aplícanse a engulir unhas mazás.

Unha ra despistada busca a auga. A Fonte do Teatro termina de ambientar o panorama.

Oca desprega despois unha alarmante topiaria: un caimán e un dragón; as armas da casa. A camelia máis alta de Europa contémplaas e conserva aínda flor ao dar a primavera. Azaleas, froiteiras e camelias comparten entón cor coas hortensias. O xardín vólvese máis concreto; brilla ao sol e despídese do halo de néboa que o cobre no inverno; dese resplandor incerto que propicia a maxia e a lenda.

Demasiado belo para ser descrito: un xardín de pedra envolto no celofán da auga.



Pastel de centola e ourizos

Ingredientes (4 persoas)

500 g de carne limpa de centola
2 kg de carne de ourizo
500 g de pescada
500 g de nata
400 g de salsa de tomate
8 ovos
Sal
Pementa
Xerminados de alfábega e chícharo

Elaboración

Cocemos as centolas, limpamos a súa carne e reservámola. Abrimos os ourizos e reservamos a súa carne e, finalmente, cocemos a pescada e tamén reservamos a súa carne limpa de espiñas e pel. Mesturámolo todo coidadosamente nun recipiente e cocémolo no forno ao baño maría a 175 ºC durante 1 hora.

Presentación

Rematamos cuns xerminados de alfábega e chícharo.

Eduardo Pardo – Domus (A Coruña)

lombo de mero con feixóns e allada galega

Ingredientes (4 persoas)

175 g de lombo de mero
Feixóns verdes
Allada
Sal
Pementa

Elaboración

Cortamos os feixóns en bastóns e cocémolos durante 2 minutos en abundante auga salgada; inmediatamente refrescámolos en auga xeada. Marcamos o mero na grella e terminámolo no forno con 4 minutos a 170ºC. Mentres tanto, salteamos os feixóns, montamos o prato e botamos de salsa unha allada galega quente.

Eduardo Pardo – Domus (A Coruña)

Pazo da Ribeira
un peligro para un mal pintor

Emprazado no val de Barcia, o xardín do pazo da Ribeira é sen dúbida, un perigo para un mal pintor.

Só un verdadeiro artista sería capaz de trasladar ao lenzo a beleza quieta dos buxos, e –o que supón un desafío aínda maior– o escuro cristal do río Barcés que compón de por si, unha límpida acuarela.

O xardín é obra de Thieve, un francés que en 1810 veu como soldado e quedou de xardineiro. Malia a súa estrutura case monacal, o conxunto encerra un innegable aire de «salón» do século XIX co seu labirinto de buxo e os seus sofás de pedra estilo imperio –ideados quizais, para que as visitas queden pouco tempo–, en conversación constante coa fonte. Baixo a pálida luz das camelias, Madame Recámier estaría no seu elemento.

«Monsiueur Thieve» ocupouse de deseñar outras dúas fontes que acompañen o discorrer dos paseos.

Das sebes e vereas que conducen á pérgola. Salpicounos de rododendros cor fucsia, de azaleas brancas e de dalias xaspeadas. E alá polos contornos de setembro dun manchón branquiazul de hortensias que contraste co vermello das canas. As aralias, negras bolas que maduran lentamente ata converterse en contas de rosarios alíñanse en torno a unha longa avenida que busca o horizonte. Pero non puido controlar os esquíos, nin menos ás londras que unha vez traspasada a cancela, escorren rápidas, en torno ao bambú negro, aos carballos, abeleiras chan, castiñeiros, freixos e álamos prateados que vistos desde a ponte, conforman un aberto bosque de ribeira.

Do pazo da Ribeira.

Peixe sapo asado, arroz cremoso de polbo e *carpaccio* de polbo

Ingredientes (4 persoas)

Para o peixe sapo asado

4 lombos de rabada sen espiña de 200 g cada uno
Sal
Aceite de oliva

Para o arroz cremoso de polbo

150 g de arroz arborio ou carnaroli
Aceite de oliva
1/2 cullerada de café de pemento da Vera
2 ceboletas picadas
2 dentes de allo picados
1/4 de pemento morrón picado
Aceite de oliva
3/4 l de auga de cocer o polbo
25 g de queixo parmesano relado
300 g de polbo cocido e picado

Para o carpaccio *de polbo*

1 polbo de 2 a 3 kg

Elaboración

Peixe sapo asado

Sazonamos o peixe e dourámolo na grella por todos os lados. Retirámolo nunha bandexa e reservámolo. No momento de servilo no prato introducímolo 5 minutos ao forno a 165 ºC.

Arroz cremoso de polbo

Rustrimos as verduras con 2 culleradas de aceite de oliva a lume moi suave. Engadimos o pemento, o polbo picado e a auga da cocción do polbo. Fervémolo todo e reservámolo.

Nun cazo poñemos o arroz ao lume e engadimos pouco a pouco o guiso do polbo. Cocemos tamén o arroz pouco a pouco ata que alcance o seu punto; entón sazonamos e ligamos co parmesano.

Carpaccio *de polbo*

Cocemos o polbo en auga fervendo, retirámolo da auga e de seguido cortámolo en tentáculos. Pasámolo a un molde de pastel colocando os tentáculos ao longo do molde ata enchelo. Prensámolo e deixámolo prensado na cámara un mínimo de 6 horas. No momento de empregalo, cortamos láminas no curtafriames.

Xoán Crujeiras – A Estación (Cambre, A Coruña)

Ensalada de centolo, xelatina de tomate e pan de millo

Ingredientes (4 persoas)

Para a ensalada

200 g de centolo cocido e esmigallado
100 g de chalota ou ceboleta picada
1 ceboliño picado
Aceite de oliva
1 culler de café de vinagre de Xerez

Para o pan de millo

Pan de boroa
2 dentes de allo
Aceite de oliva

Para a xelatina de tomate

2 kg de tomates moi maduros
30 g de azucre
Sal

Elaboración

Para a ensalada

Mesturamos todos estes ingredientes suavemente e sazonamos.

Pan de millo

Dun anaco de pan de boroa cortamos láminas no curtafriames e fritímolas lixeiramente en aceite con dous dentes de allo, ata que se douren. Reservámolas sobre papel absorbente.

Xelatina de tomate

Partimos os tomates en anacos grosos, sazonámolos co sal e o azucre e amasamos coas mans. Entón, poñémolo dentro dunha tea de gasa e colgámolo na cámara sobre un recipiente para que o líquido do tomate escorra. Así obtemos un líquido transparente. Por cada $^1/_2$ litro de auga de tomate, engadimos 2 follas de xelatina. A continuación, rehidratamos a xelatina en auga fría. Quentamos o $^1/_2$ litro de auga de tomate e desfacemos nela a xelatina. Por último, deixamos arrefriar.

Xoán Crujeiras – A Estación (Cambre, A Coruña)

Pegullal
Eurípides no xardín

Inmerso na Galicia tropical xunta as ribeiras do Miño, o xardín do pazo de Pegullal responde a un trazado xeométrico inmediatamente camuflado polas veladuras dunha vexetación exuberante. Como xurdido dun gravado antigo, o escenario invita a considerar «o transcendente». Paisaxes de buxo, agochos.

A inquietante intimidade do labirinto. Misteriosos paseos semiocultos á vista inducen a sisudas reflexións: filosofía no fondo da follaxe; Eurípides sentiríase no seu elemento.

Pegullal evoca o mellor do Mundo Antigo. Un deseño propio do renacemento italiano que busca o equilibrio do clásico. O xardín discorre dun extremo a outro da casa sen perder por iso sincronía.

Sebes e estanques alónganse impecables en contraste coa irregularidade da fachada. O conxunto transmite unha serenidade que non é estática pois é o propio xardín o que o impide. Os magnolios, as gardenias, as licinias que arroiban en abril. Os miles de chispiñas de luz que habitan saltareiras nas fontes, os diferentes ecos da auga que guinda cada gárgola van debuxando unha sucesión de paisaxes de perfume, de cores, de formas, de rumores, que non permanecen quietos un instante. Transforman os currunchos a capricho dos días, das horas ás veces de maneira descarada, outras discreta. Con desvergonzado desenfado mediterráneo unha figueira traspasada polo sol alza as súas pólas en signo de vitoria. No alto cimbra unha palmeira. Marmelos, granadas, limoeiros esquecen que San Bieito desde a súa capela os vixía. En realidade o santo ocúpase do seu carballo, –600 anos leva no empeño–, ameazando con arrincarlle a saúde ao ousado que corte a máis mínima poliña. Con éxito. Pola comarca ao menos, aínda non se encontrou quen se atreva.

Gazpacho, sorbete de sandía e lagostino mariñado con herba luísa

Ingredientes (4 persoas)

Para o gazpacho

1 kg de tomates maduros
100 g de pemento verde
2 dentes de allo
100 g de pan previamente remollado
4 culleradas sopeiras de aceite de oliva virxe
Vinagre de Xerez ao gusto
Sal
Auga

Para o sorbete de sandía

800 g de sandía sen pebida
5 g de estabilizante
Glicosa

Para o lagostino mariñado

4 colas de lagostino
Sal Maldon
Vinagre
Aceite de oliva
Cebola
Fiúncho
Unhas follas de herba luísa

Elaboración

Gazpacho

Batemos todos os ingredientes excepto a auga nun robot de cociña. Segundo se trituran imos engadindo a auga ata conseguir o punto que nos guste. Por último, rectificamos de sal e vinagre.

Sorbete de sandía

Trituramos todos os ingredientes, deixámolos descansar 12 horas e despois metémolos no conxelador 24 horas máis. No momento do pase turbinámolo.

Lagostino mariñado

Cortamos a cebola e o fiúncho en xuliana e incorporámoslle o vinagre, o aceite e as follas de herba luísa. Neste conxunto deixamos mariñar unhas horas os lagostinos. No momento de servir, atravesamos os lagostinos cun espeto, marcámolos na chapa 4 segundos por cada lado e poñémoslles un pouco de sal Maldon.

Miguel A. Campos – A Gabeira (Ferrol, A Coruña)

Taco de bonito sobre crema de marmitako e mosaico de verduras

Ingredientes (4 persoas)

Bonito
Sal Maldon

Para o marmitako

250 g de recortes de bonito
150 g de pataca
Pemento en po doce
1 folla de loureiro
1 pemento chouriceiro
1 pemento verde
Foumet de bonito

Para o mosaico de verduras

80 g de feixóns
80 g de cenoria
80 g de pemento morrón verde
80 g de pemento morrón vermello

Elaboración

Cos tacos de bonito faremos uns rectángulos de 140 gramos, e reservamos os recortes para o *marmitako.*

Marmitako

Triturámolos todos os ingredientes menos os recortes, pasámolos polo cribo fino e rectificamos de sal.

Mosaico de verduras

Cortamos os ingredientes en paisana fina e salteámolos ata que empecen a soltar os azucres. Entón reservámolos para a montaxe.

A continuación marcamos os tacos de bonito á grella. Temos que deixalos pouco feitos e sazonados con sal Maldon.

Miguel A. Campos – A Gabeira (Ferrol, A Coruña)

Trasouto
un xardín de paz

O xardín de San Lourenzo de Trasouto transcende a botánica. O de menos son as plantas, a cuncha e a cruz de Santiago que trazan os buxos no claustro. Non importan nin o trazado nin as fontes. Cal cómpre a un antigo mosteiro, o seu xardín é un lugar de rezos e silencios. Un lugar que apetece os murmurios. Non se pode falar doutra maneira. Polo menos; non se debe. A auga non obstante, non obedece.

A auga que interpreta os seus rumores a tres voces, estala en finos chorros na fonte coa claridade dunha trompeta. Óese o áspero «plof» dun caño gordo nunha pía e unha rápida corrente discorre pola quenlla pois ao fin, isto é unha horta e nela, o xardín conserva intacta a súa alma de convento. Unha alma que é morada e non refuxio. Que se carga de enerxía a partir dos silencios e recobra a medida das cousas con só pasear entre as sebes. Entre cuadrículas que foron de prosaicas hortalizas, –non hai moito de poesía nun pemento–, flúe unha tranquilidade que é plena e sen nostalxias. O ceo colabora no empeño.

E o xardín comunica todo isto. Ao saír o ánimo está presto a afrontar o que faga falta.

Dentro o xardín respira en gris. O sol da tarde criba a luz xusta para tinguir de azulado os parterres. Faias e abetos recortan contra o ceo a silueta imaxinada da torre desmochada dun castelo con ruinosas ameas e escaleiras. Un templiño emerxe como pode entre grandes palmeiras de dátiles.

Inverosímiles rosas de pitiminí crecen delicadas como sopros. Parece que se van desfacer con só velas. Dalias, gardenias. Unha roseira silvestre nacida da paisaxe. Pouco a pouco as árbores van pechando unha bóveda elevada de ramaxe que acaba en intricada carballeira. Ole a loureiro e a herba luísa. Por aquí atopouse unha imaxe de pedra da Virxe, –século XV, din–, que agora preside o claustro en constante presenza do eterno. Non ten advocación determinada: A Virxe das Augas podería ser, pois habita un altar xunta a fonte. Uns cantos anxiños acompáñana, –repoludos como deben ser os anxiños–, e ocúltanse con ela, entre os buxos. Imperturbable, a auga executa o seu concerto.

Do claustro á capela, Trasouto vólvese monumento e reafirma a súa identidade de mosteiro. A luz fíncase no retablo barroco e as árbores esperan; o que se celebra na igrexa, –xa se sabe–, festéxase no xardín.

Ante as portas de San Lourenzo de Trasouto a cidade de Santiago de Compostela detense.

Non é para menos.

Bonito mariñado

Ingredientes (4 persoas)

As peles de 2 laranxas, 1limón
e 1 lima
1 peza de bonito
Sal gordo
Aceite de oliva virxe extra (arbosana)
Vinagre de Xerez
Leituga vermella
Ceboliño
Follas de limoeiro
Cravo
Pementa, etc.

Elaboración

Limpamos ben as peles dos cítricos e deshidratámolas para despois facer un po con elas.

Introducimos no aceite a 65 ºC o ceboliño, o cravo, etc. A continuación, pasamos a quitar as peles e as espiñas do bonito e quedamos cos seus catro lombos. Introducímolos na mestura do po de cítricos con sal por espazo dunha hora. O seguinte paso é limpalos e metelos no aceite aromatizado xa coado e frío un mínimo de 36 horas.

Presentación

Para terminar cortamos os lombos en tacos de 2 por 2 centímetros e colocámolos nun prato coa leituga vermella aliñada co aceite da mariñada e o vinagre de Xerez.

Rafael Centeno – Maruja Limón (Vigo, Pontevedra)

Moega de tenreira, uvas e queixo San Simón

Ingredientes (4 persoas)

Moegas de tenreira
Uvas
1/4 l de leite
1/2 l de nata
As peles do queixo afumado
1 peza de 80 g de queixo limpa
Caldo de tenreira feito de maneira tradicional
Sal

Elaboración

Escaldamos as moegas e limpámolas de peles para despois metelas no caldo uns 50 minutos, dependendo do tamaño, a 75 ºC, abatemos (esta operación poderá realizarse tamén ao baleiro) e reservamos. A continuación, quitámoslles as pebidas ás uvas e máis a pel. Introducimos as codias do queixo nos lácteos ata conseguir o gusto desexado, coamos e trituramos co taco do queixo e salgamos. Volvemos coar e metemos a mestura nun sifón para mantela quente.

Seguidamente, marcamos as moegas nunha grella e bañámolas co caldo de tenreira reducido.

Presentación

Disporemos un pouco de queixo nun prato, as uvas e enriba a moega cunhas escamas de sal.

Rafael Centeno – Maruja Limón (Vigo, Pontevedra)

Pazo da Golpelleira
o feliz aire dos anos 20

O aire feliz dos «anos 20» flota sobre os xardíns do pazo da Golpelleira coma se non pasara ningún tempo e mozos despreocupados e elegantes, estivesen a piques de materializarse de pronto nun vieiro cunha raqueta de tenis nas mans. O tráfico de Vilagarcía de Arousa estaría completamente fóra de contexto.

A Golpelleira conserva intacto o espírito das vilas de veraneo de entón. Reina un universo refinado, confortable. Románticos currunchos suavizan como poden o trazo estrito das sebes; clásico e francés por descontado. Impecables paseos de grava pérdense da vista da casa. Ao fondo, unha palmeira «con enaguas» preside unha rotonda de sabor mediterráneo. Airosa, risoña. Zumega desenfado. Claro que vista desde abaixo, tamén podería tratarse dun paraugas invertido e semiaberto, pero non. O que as palmas debuxan no alto, son decididamente unhas enaguas. Aos seus pés, iucas, tileiros, figueiras. Un verdor con aroma a limoeiro e un esquío que escorre entre os piñeiros.

Tentadoras boliñas de laranxa alegran a follaxe. Brillantes, redondiñas. Pero agres.

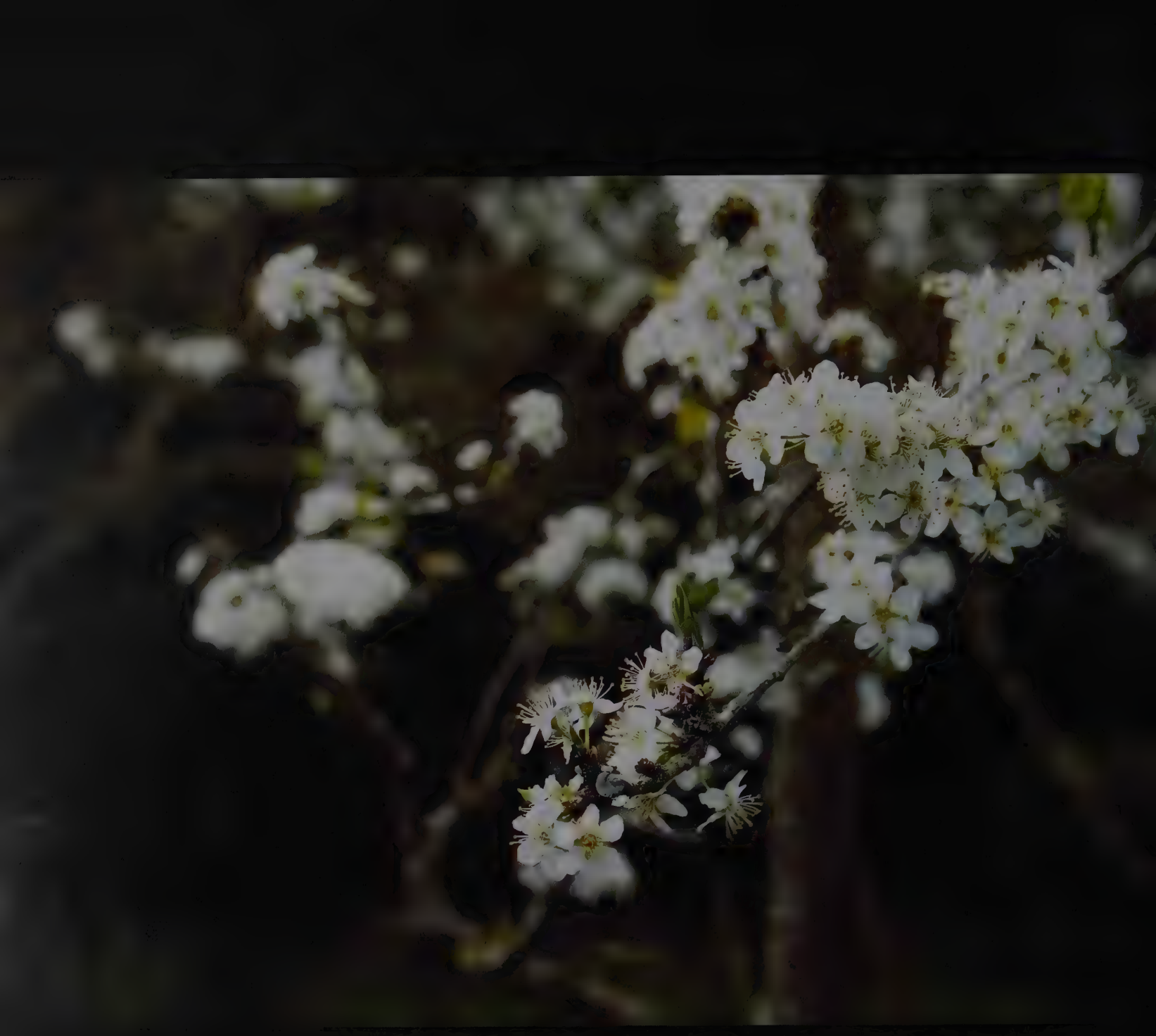
Un ambiente malicioso. Idílico, pulido e elegante que recrean as revistas ilustradas.

O xardín discorre despois máis ríxido e estrito pero nunca menos belo. O sol verniza as folliñas de buxo tódolos días, e píntaas con esmalte das uñas. Unha cova de camelias forma un túnel sombrío que florece no inverno. Rosáceas, vermellas, brancas; a célebre «Alba Plena» que trouxo para o pazo tantos premios. Nos parterres habitan macizos de petunias. Rosas, azuis. Un corro de sebes forma círculo en torno a unha mesa de pedra cos seus bancos. Roseiras venerables, magnolios, xirasoles esculcan as ventás da casa.

Pouco a pouco, o xardín vaise volvendo dun «agreste contido», a medida que se avanza cara á finca: «salvaxe ma non tanto», co seu estanque en forma de dúas lágrimas. As enormes costelas de Adán das beiras ocultan calquera tipo de vergonzas: e á propia Eva se fai falta. Xunta a pista de tenis de terra batida, unha das primeiras existentes en Galicia, un velador de pedra brindaba un punto de repouso aos tenistas.

Aqueles longos veráns...!

COL PELLEIRA



Rulo de corzo, crema de nabo e salsa de P. X.

Ingredientes

Para o corzo

1 lombo de corzo
1 cebola
1 branco de porro
1 pemento
2 dentes de allo
1 cenoria
1 l de caldo de polo
1 dl de viño tinto
4 láminas de touciño de porco
Aceite de Oliva
Sal

Para a crema de nabo

2 nabos
1 cebola
2 dentes de allo
20 g de manteiga
1 dl de nata
1 dl de caldo de verduras
Aceite de oliva

Para a salsa de P. X.

3 dl de viño P. X.
20 g de uvas pasas
Salsa de guisar o corzo

Elaboración

Corzo

Limpamos moi ben o corzo, cortámolo en cadrados uniformes que douramos e reservamos. No mesmo aceite facemos un fondo de verduras. Engadimos viño tinto e deixamos reducir un pouco. Entón, introducimos o corzo, engadimos un pouco de caldo e deixamos que se vaia facendo lentamente.

Unha vez que o corzo estea, escorrémolo e envolvémolo en touciño coa axuda de papel transparente e deixámolo arrefriar cun peso por riba.

Crema de nabo

Rustrimos un pouco de cebola e allo co aceite de oliva e un pouco de manteiga e engadimos o nabo cortado en anacos pequenos. Cando estea ben rustrido, agregamos un pouco de nata e de fondo verduras. Triturámolo todo e pasámolo polo coador.

Salsa de P. X.

Poñemos un viño doce con uva de Pedro Ximénez a reducir. Cando o teñamos ben reducido, engadimos un pouco do fondo do corzo e unhas uvas pasas.

Presentación

Cortamos o corzo en toros e marcámolos á grella ata que se lles faga un pouco de costra. Introducímolos no forno ata que estean ben quentes por dentro. Entón, quentamos a crema de nabo, poñémola ao lado do corzo e estendemos a salsa de P. X.

Héctor López – Restaurante España (Lugo)

Perdiz en escabeche con pementos asados e vinagreta de níscaros

Ingredientes (4 persoas)

4 perdices
1 l de caldo de polo
3 dl de vinagre de Xerez
1 cebola
2 dentes de allo
1 limón
Sal

Para a vinagreta de níscaros

200 g de níscaros
50 g de vinagre
100 g de auga
100 g de aceite de oliva virxe
Sal
Pementa negra

Para os pementos asados

4 pementos
1/2 dl de vinagre
2 dl de aceite
4 lascas de xamón
Sal

Elaboración

Perdices

En primeiro lugar, douramos as perdices con aceite a lume forte e despois rustrimos cebola e allo nunha ola. Entón, engadimos caldo de polo, vinagre de Xerez e un limón cortado en lascas. Introducimos as perdices e deixámolo facerse a lume lento. Cando estean listas, deixámolas arrefriar e esmagámolas.

Níscaros

Cocemos os níscaros nunha parte de vinagre e dúas partes de auga. Poñemos sal e pementa negra ao punto e deixámolo arrefriar na mesma auga. A continuación, picamos os níscaros e facemos unha vinagreta con aceite de oliva virxe.

Pementos

Asamos os pementos no forno co aceite, o vinagre e o sal, e nunha bandexa entre dúas teas tipo Silpat facemos os crocantes de xamón co forno a unha temperatura suave.

Presentación

Facemos unha cama cos pementos asados e imos alternando capas de xamón crocante e perdiz. Por último, botámoslle a vinagreta de níscaros.

Héctor López – Restaurante España (Lugo)

xardín de Esperante
«un máis da familia»

Xa o avisan as campaíñas azuis que exercen de porteiras e as figueiras do inferno, tamén en forma de campá que tintinan o seu perfume, cada vez que se abre ou se cerra a cancela: «Este xardín é un máis da familia».

Hai xardíns románticos, nostálxicos, clásicos. estritos. Ou perfectos. O do pazo de Esperante en Quembre é sobre todo, un xardín risoño. Un contorno que transmite quentura máis que alegría. Coma quen penetra no patio dun castelo, unha estreita escaleira de pedra deslízase entre as murallas dun buxo espeso e verde-negro. Altas sebes que a modo de vestíbulo protexen a intimidade do resto do xardín, da casa e da finca. Risoños, descarados, uns cantos caraveis amarelos saúdan moi tesos no centro dun parterre que se fai pasadizo antes de franquear a muralla ata abrirse ao azul do horizonte. O aroma dun falso xasmín agarda na escaleira presto a dar a benvida.

O terreo que se estende ante a vista entrégase á mirada sen reservas, o que non quere dicir que sen segredos. O xardín baixa ata o río, disposto en bancais de cores. Flores de todos os matices, –rosas, azuis, brancas, amarelas–. O toque malva dun magnolio xaponés e pequeniño sen forzas xa, para botar ademais da flor, algunhas follas. Unha camelia tamén compatriota acompáñao. Hai chícharos de olor, lirios, dalias. E outras tantas plantas que de rigoroso incógnito ou con nome coñecido se aloxan en macetas e muretes que se perden no bosque.

Alí, entre carballos faias, salgueiros e castiñeiros, todos os contraluces do verde se apoderan da paisaxe. Verdes ouro, verdes secos, ou mazá. O sol ilumina a herba arrincándolle alegres esmeraldas. O hórreo convertido en cuarto de xogar dá o contrapunto enxebre a dúas palmeiras; delgada unha, a outra regordeta. O conxunto enteiro exhibe o esmerado «descoido» dun xardín inglés. Nada de trazados rigorosos; rosas e lavandas crecen onde poden en aparente e británico desorde. Aos pés do pazo, dunha casa que en 1512 xa era fidalga, as buganvíleas trepan polo muro.

Con toda confianza.

Tomate *Kinder*

Ingredientes (4 persoas)

4 tomates de rama
$^1/_2$ l de augardente de tomate
$1^1/_2$ l de vinagre de Módena
2 culleradas sopeiras de tomate en po
30 g de pilpil de pescada
$^1/_2$ dente de allo branqueado
3 dl de aceite de oliva Siurana 0,2º para o pilpil
8 cl para o sazonamento
Sal Maldon

Elaboración

Infusión de augardente e vinagre

Quentamos a 65 ºC a augardente e o vinagre. Engadimos unha cullerada de tomate en po, disolvemos ben este último e deixámolo arrefriar.

Tomates

Escaldamos os tomates e somerxémolos inmediatamente en auga con xeo, pelámolos e secámolos ben. Coa axuda dunha culleriña francesa, baleirámolos de auga e pebidas practicando unha apertura na base de cada tomate. Temos que reservar a auga de vexetación.

Impregnación dos tomates

Introducimos os tomates na reixa da Gastrovac e engadimos a infusión fría de augardente e vinagre. Facemos baleiro durante 15 minutos (a unha presión de 0,8 bar) e somerxemos os tomates. Retiramos o aceite pouco a pouco para que estes se impregnen ben. Sacamos os tomates, escorrémolos e gardamos esta infusión para posteriores impregnacións.

Pilpil de tomate

No vaso do batedor introducimos o pilpil de pescada, a auga de vexetación dos tomates, unha cullerada de tomate en po e o allo branqueado e triturámolo todo a conciencia. Pouco a pouco imos engadindo o aceite de oliva ata lograr unha emulsión estable. Introducímolo nun sifón cunha carga de CO_2 e deixámolo arrefriar durante unha hora na neveira.

Presentación

Enchemos os tomates co pilpil de tomate e colocámolos nos pratos. Esparexemos un pouco de aceite de oliva extra Siurana e sazonamos co sal Maldon.

Marcelo Tejedor – Casa Marcelo (Santiago de Compostela, A Coruña)

Salmón, alga, herbas e conservas en vinagre

Ingredientes (4 persoas)

Para o salmón mariñado

300 g de salmón escocés
20 g de azucre
300 g de sal gordo
5 g de pementa desfeita

Para a vinagreta de anís

20 g de azucre
5 cl de auga
1 baga de badiana
10 grans de anís
2 cl de vinagre de arroz
1 tomate deshidratado
2 culleradas de aceite de oliva virxe
Sal

Para o cogombro en vinagre

1 cogombro
1/2 l de vinagre de mazá
4 brotes de alga musgo de Irlanda
4 alcaparras grandes
Follas de estragón
Follas de alfábega violeta
Feixóns verdes
Sal Maldon
Pickles de xenxibre

Elaboración

Retirámoslles as espiñas ao salmón e cubrímolo coa mestura de azucre, sal e pementa. A continuación, ten que mariñar durante 12 horas.

Para a vinagreta, levamos a ebulición a auga co azucre. Retirámolo do lume e introducimos a badiana e os grans de anís. Deixamos que arrefríe e rematamos engadindo o vinagre de arroz, o tomate deshidratado cortado nunha paisana fina e o aceite de oliva virxe e reservámolo todo. Cocemos os feixóns verdes en auga con sal, para despois refrescalos en auga con xeo. Escorrémolos e reservámolos.

A continuación, pelamos o cogombro e cortámolo ao longo e, ao mesmo tempo, cada metade en lascas de 1 centímetro.

Dispoñemos o vinagre de mazá nun recipiente dentro da Gastrovac ou similar. Introducimos as lascas de cogombro na cesta, cerramos a tapa e facemos o baleiro durante 15 minutos. Ao cabo deste tempo, somerxemos a cesta co cogombro no vinagre e deixámolo 10 minutos máis. Retiramos o baleiro pouco a pouco e extraemos os cogombros, que estarán impregnados de vinagre.

Agora cocemos o musgo de Irlanda durante 3 minutos en auga, refrescámolo en auga con xeo e reservámolo.

Preparamos algunhas folliñas de estragón e de alfábega violeta. Laminamos en bisel e finamente os feixóns verdes. Retiramos o salmón da mariñada, lavámolo ben e secámolo. Sacámoslle a pel cun coitelo e facemos toros de 1 centímetro.

Presentación

Nos pratos depositamos unha culleradiña de vinagreta de anís e colocamos os toros de salmón, os cogombros curtidos en vinagre, a alga, as herbas, as alcaparras, os feixóns e o *pickle* de xenxibre rosa. Rematamos dando un toque de sal Maldon.

Marcelo Tejedor – Casa Marcelo (Santiago de Compostela, A Coruña)

Fefiñáns
o bosque máxico

Tralas impoñentes murallas do pazo de Fefiñáns agáchase un xardín máxico tupido de follaxe ao que se entra sen pensar. Como dun salto, por un gran portón que só se abre a medias.

Un espeso aroma a madreselva flota sobre os fieitos milenarios. A luz fíncase nas ramas das árbores. Longas sombras arrástranse polo chan inquietas e cambiantes. O contorno, pleno de estalos, murmurios e silencios esparexe a certeza de que o tempo aquí non conta. Foise. Ou polo menos, discorre silandeiramente. Palmeiras, buxos, carballos. Unha roca de granito rosa do lugar como un gran elefante durme recuberta de musgo nun curruncho. Bancos de pedra. Claroscuros; só falta Alicia e o seu coello.

Costa regresar; admitir que se volva abrir a porta e deixar atrás «o bosque máxico». Atravesar a finca, as parras, as fontes de auga escura de estilo barroco ou non, –que niso non intervén a maxia, senón o tempo–. Séculos de augas incansables que brotan alá arriba, baixo o cruceiro convertidas en tentadores espellos negros. Logo sen ceder ao reclamo de seu brillo, ao magnetismo burlón oculto nos seus reflexos alcánzase xa, a silueta do pazo por detrás da ponte. Desa ponte elevada sobre o Camiño Real que converte a praza en singular, coa igrexa de San Bieito e o propio pazo que desde o século XVI, conforma un dos conxuntos monumentais máis fermosos de España.

A Fefiñáns hai que ir pouco despois da vendima, cando a terra adquire olor e color a carapela. Un aroma brunido de ocres, intenso e cálido coma a luz do outono.

«Todo isto che darei –tentaba o demo a Cristo–
menos Fefiñáns, Cambados e San Tomé».

Enténdese a resistencia do Demo

Cacheira tostada con crema de cabaza e soia

Ingredientes (4 persoas)

1 cacheira afumada
40 g de azucre

Para a redución de soia

1/4 l de salsa de soia
30 g de azucre
30 g de glicosa

Para a crema de cabaza

100 g de cabaza limpa
1/2 cebola do país
1 dente de allo
1 dl de caldo de tenreira
35 g de manteiga
Sal
Pementa

Elaboración

Poñemos a desalgar a cacheira durante 12 horas. Pasado ese tempo, lavámola, cepillámola e cocémola durante 3 horas a lume moi suave. Despois desosámola en quente e prensámola. A continuación, reducimos a soia co azucre e a glicosa ata que quede nun quinto do seu volume aproximadamente.

Para a crema de cabaza, rustrimos os elementos sólidos coa manteiga, engadimos o caldo e deixamos cocer ata que todos os ingredientes estean brandos. Entón triturámolos, coámolos, botámoslles sal e pementa. Pasamos un taco de cacheira por azucre e ao pase torrámolo nunha tixola antiadherente. Por último, metémolo no forno a 70 ºC durante 20 minutos.

Presentación

Acompañamos a cacheira coa crema de cabaza e a redución de soia.

Javier González – A Rexidora (Bentraces, Ourense)

Sigrás
buxo bicentenario

Fronte á explanada do pazo de Sigrás, o buxo bicentenario exprésase nos parterres impecable e preciso. Nin unha soa folliña se despeitea, nin se atreve a medrar fóra de sitio. Ordenado tranquilo, neste xardín clásico de estilo italiano que trepa polo outeiro ata a casa, todas as plantas saben ben cal é o seu sitio. Polo menos as que crecen baixo a vixilancia inmediata do escudo que campa na fachada. Andrades, Montenegros; calquera se desmanda. As outras, as camelias, os magnolios, o gran abeto gris, o piñeiro en forma de candelabro escorren costa abaixo cara á finca pois odian suxeitarse a tanta simetría. O cedro do Líbano sobre todo, non podería. Tampouco o piñeiro cualificado de exemplar «único» pola súa idade e dimensións pola Xunta.

Os loureiros pola contra, despiden o seu zumarento aroma ao vento aliñados en cumprida formación, coma unha cerimoniosa carreira de honor á entrada da finca.

Sigrás é un fiel expoñente da flora dos pazos. A mesmísima Universidade de Santiago ocupouse de catalogalo. Rebelde, salvaxe e refinado, o xardín mantén ben definidos os seus espazos dispostos cada cal, con arranxo a unha peculiar idiosincrasia.

Detrás da casa, camiño do monte enmarañado e anárquico un arco do século XV acubilla unha porta que en agosto ocultan as hortensias e unha escaleira de pedra que no inverno pintan de rosa as camelias. Da torre que desde aquí debeu darlle señorío ao val de Cela, noutros tempos só queda un cáliz gravado en pedra; o selo do canteiro. Polo demais, un denso bosque de carballos, de pradairos, de olmos custodia unha sobreira cada día máis repoluda.

Uns cantos lirios africanos, falsas lilas que non enganan a ninguén florecen tralo pozo. Á súa vez, os castiñeiros parecen xurdir directamente do chan coma se non tivesen tronco. En total, un contorno agreste, case fero que vixía e aínda domina a comarca estendida aos seus pés, aberta ao horizonte.

Polbo con crema de pemento e mexillón á alfábega

Ingredientes (4 persoas)

1 polbo
Pemento en po
Flor de sal

Para a crema de pemento

1/2 kg de pementos vermellos do país
50 g de manteiga
20 g de azucre
Sal

Para o mexillón á alfábega

1/2 kg de mexillóns
1 dl de viño branco Monterrey
5 g de folla de alfábega

Para a guarnición

4 pataquiñas cocidas
2 ceboliñas en láminas

Elaboración

Limpamos o polbo como procede e cocémolo partindo de auga fervendo e despois de tres escaldados. Cando estea tenro deixámolo repousar durante 20 minutos máis ou menos. Entón, escorrémolo, arrefriámolo e cortamos catro tacos da parte máis próxima á cabeza. A continuación reservámolo.

Para a crema de pemento, poñemos a estufar os pementos limpos coa manteiga e o azucre durante 30 minutos. Trituramos coa cantidade de líquido pertinente ata que teña consistencia de crema suave, coámolo e reservamos á calor.

En canto aos mexillóns, facémolos abrir ao vapor co viño e, unha vez abertos, engadimos a alfábega e deixamos aromatizar 2 minutos co lume apagado.

Presentación

Torramos un pouco o polbo á grella e acompañámolo coa crema de pemento, a guarnición, o mexillón, o pemento en po, a alfábega e a flor de sal.

Javier González – A Rexidora (Bentraces, Ourense)

Jaz
o pazo emboscado

Emboscado tralas súas fachadas cubertas de buganvíleas e de hedra, o pazo de Jaz asómase ao xardín que entra na casa, ao igual que a casa está perfectamente integrada no xardín. As sebes de mirto albergan unha infinita sincronía de cores: as moradas, as marróns, a vermella forte dos gladíolos, penetran pola galería. Polos corredores.

Entre os ocos das portas. Ata a cociña e no despacho decorado cunha serie de láminas de plantas tan reais que se poderían engadir ás que hai fóra. Desde calquera curruncho, o xardín traspasa as ventás que á súa vez iluminan a hedra, as buganvíleas e as sombras dos teixos.

Grandes bolas asentadas sobre os parterres que descenden nun ordenado labirinto de paseos. Magnolios, castiñeiros, cedros, limoeiros. Bancos e escaleiras de pedra peneiradas de musgo. Un deseño francés que non pode ser máis inglés, se se ve desde a casa. Sinxelo e austero. A regularidade dos macizos contrasta cun enmarañado mar de «canas», fieitos e o toque azul do lirio africano. Un bambú africano achega o contrapunto exótico ao conxunto. Un irónico nicho de buxo, semioculta unha figuriña de Neptuno, coma un chisco. Lonxe da severidade solemne do clásico, en Jaz a sensación é de alegría. Pazo e xardín outórgana mutuamente.

Ostras con emulsión de limón e xenxibre

Ingredientes (4 persoas)

4 ostras gordas
Zume de 2 limóns
1 cabeza de pescada
1 dente de allo
Aceite de oliva
Vinagre de Módena reducido
Xenxibre fresco
Sal
Un relador tipo Microplane

Elaboración

Metemos a cabeza da pescada cun pouco de auga e un chorriño de aceite nunha bolsa de baleiro, pechámola e cocemos a 100 ºC uns 25 minutos. A continuación, coámola e reservámola.

No batedor trituramos o allo co limón e a xelatina de peixe, dámoslle o punto de sal e montamos co aceite ata obter unha textura de maionesa.

Presentación

Abrimos coidadosamente as ostras e debuxamos no prato unha bágoa de emulsión de limón. Arredor desta poñemos un fío de vinagre, dispoñemos a ostra sobre a emulsión e rematamos cun pouco de rela de xenxibre.

Pepe Solla – Casa Solla (San Salvador de Poio, Pontevedra)

Requeixo das Neves e tomate nunha pequena ensalada

Ingredientes (4 persoas)

4 tomates pequenos
15 g de azucre moreno
1 dl de aceite de oliva
0,3 dl de salsa de soia
1 presa de allos tenros
Requeixo das Neves
Aceite de oliva verxe
Brotes de ceboliño e remolacha
Vinagre de mazá
Wasabi
Pementa
Sal

Elaboración

Escaldamos con coidado os tomates e pelámolos. Introducimos todos os elementos nunha bolsa de baleiro e cocemos a 65 ºC durante 15 minutos. Unha vez cumprido o tempo, abrimos e salteamos o conxunto a lume vivo, metémolo no forno a temperatura media uns 20 minutos vixiando e bañando de vez en cando e reservámolo.

Entón, esfollamos os allos tenros e cando quede a parte máis tenra cortámolos en finas tiras, introducímolas en auga con xeo durante 5 horas e logo escorrémolas e reservámolas.

Presentación

Traballamos o requeixo ata que sexa unha pasta maleable e untámola nun recipiente. Sobre o requeixo dispoñemos cada tomate e a pequena ensalada de allos tenros e brotes e aliñamos co aceite e o vinagre, salpementamos e servimos.

Pepe Solla – Casa Solla (San Salvador de Poio, Pontevedra)

Santa Cruz de Ribadulla
a granxa do Señor

As ilustres camelias de Santa Cruz de Ribadulla despréganse por un xardín con vocación de xungla que descende cara ao río, cada vez máis exuberante e máis xurásico. Un xardín poboado por fieitos de Ceilán de aqueles que serviron de fogar ao dinosauro, e nacen agora enrolados en forma de bastón de peregrino, quizais por deferencia a Santiago. Sequoias xigantes e fervenzas completan o ambiente milenario. As follas ovaladas dos ficus velan a entrada a un emparrado escuro e máxico: a cova do dragón, cuxo único inquilino de momento é unha fonte. Dentro, unha maraña de rubideiras eleva a columna de Bernini, o prosaico poste dunha parra: un barroco natural incuestionable. Grosas capas de musgo camuflan as fauces da gárgola e fanse donas despois do resto do xardín: dos estanques, das varandas de madeira das pontes.

Sobre unha mesa de pedra repousan os despoxos do inverno: flores de todo tipo, pólas; algunhas follas soltas. Abrochiños e cabezas de camelias desgaxadas pero intactas. Pois ao fin, a camelia, que é flor de señorío, non se desgaxa ao morrer coma as outras: cae enteira. Coma se a decapitaran: cousas da aristocracia. As 400.000 variedades que habitan Ribadulla, ilustres como o avoengo da casa, déronlle fama ao pazo e viron pasear por aquí a Jovellanos, un sabio que, a máis de ilustre, era ilustrado. Nesta mesa rodeado quizá do mesmo bodegón vexetal improvisado, no mesmo contorno húmido e sombrío, escribiu un longo memorándum: e iso que en principio veu curarse dun catarro. De todo iso, van xa 200 anos.

Enfronte, prímulas e violetas aventúranse a explorar a primavera. O verde vólvese esmeralda e a xungla, unha selva máis aberta. Os loureiros con olor a améndoa amarga dos que se saca o cianuro, xa non inquietan. Vellos magnolios e froiteiras dan paso ás terras de labor que para a familia o pazo non foi sempre, máis que «a granxa de Ortigueira». Ao outro lado da casa e dunha capela que na mellor tradición do señorío permanece aberta a todos, a célebre «Carreira dos Olivos» mostra as súas rugosas raíces retorcidas coma un desafío ao tempo.

Tostas de lacón, padróns e queixo de Arzúa

Ingredientes (4 persoas)

120 g de pan de boroa
125 g de lacón cocido
12 pementos de Padrón grandes
125 g de queixo de Arzúa
Aceite de oliva
Sal groso

Elaboración

Comezamos cortando a boroa en lascas finas e facemos uns discos de pan pequenos coa axuda dun curtapastas redondo. Cortamos tamén o lacón en rebandas non moi finas e rompemos o queixo groseiramente en anacos pequenos. Fritimos os pementos en abundante aceite de oliva e sazonámolos con sal groso ao retiralos. Salteamos nunha tixola con aceite de oliva os discos de pan por ambos lados ata que queden ben dourados, e na mesma tixola salteamos tamén e rapidamente o lacón.

Presentación

Sobre cada pan dispoñemos un pouco de queixo alternado co lacón e coroamos cun pemento frito. Dispoñemos tres por prato a modo de aperitivo.

Javier Rodríguez «Taki»

Vieiras rustridas con cogomelos de temporada e cabaza en escabeche

Ingredientes (4 persoas)

4 vieiras grandes
250 g de setas de temporada (níscaros, boletos, etc.)
1 dl de caldo de carne
1 dente de allo
Aceite de oliva suave

Para o escabeche

0,2 l de aceite de oliva suave
0,05 l de vinagre de viño
1/2 cebola
1 dente de allo
1 cenoria
1 rama de tomiño
1 culleradiña de pemento en po agridoce
1 ovo
200 g de cabaza limpa
Pementa
Sal

Elaboración

Limpamos as vieiras e dámoslles uns cortes formando cadros por unha das súas caras. Limpamos tamén os cogomelos e picamos o dente de allo. Facemos o escabeche fritindo no aceite a cebola, o allo e a cenoria, todo picado fino. Retirámolo do lume e engadimos o tomiño, o pemento en po e o vinagre e mesturámolo todo ben.

Entón cortamos a cabaza en dados e confeitamos suavemente no escabeche 15 minutos (é mellor deixalo repousar dun día para outro). Cando o escabeche estea frío, sacamos unha parte do líquido xunto cun pouco da verdura e triturámolo co brazo eléctrico engadindo o ovo coma se se tratase dunha maionesa. Salpementamos e alixeiramos con auga ata que consigamos a consistencia dunha salsa espesa.

Salteamos os cogomelos con aceite e o dente de allo picado e engadimos un pouco de caldo de carne. Salteamos tamén brevemente a lume vivo os dados de cabaza e, a continuación, as vieiras polas dúas caras; apagamos o lume e mollámolas cun pouco de caldo de carne para que se glaseen.

Presentación

Dispoñemos nos pratos unha cullerada de cogomelos, enriba poñemos as vieiras, un cordón da salsa montada de escabeche e os dados de cabaza arredor.

Javier Rodríguez «Taki»

Rubiáns
10 árbores e un estanque de nenúfares

De Rubiáns poderían dicirse moitas cousas: históricas, poéticas ou simplemente belas e todas serían certas. Pero a imaxe que vén á memoria é a dun conxunto de nenúfares descansando sobre o fondo escuro dun estanque. Vermellos, brancos, amarelos; ofrécense á lúa cando queren ou recóllense en si mesmos polas tardes. Non se sabe «o cándo» nin « o porqué»; é un enigma vexetal incuestionable.

O pazo sobresae entre as árbores coa soberbia sinxeleza da casa-forte que foi antano. Soleira secular feita follaxe que expresan coma ninguén unha decena de «árbores monumentais» testemuñas dos avatares do pazo e da liñaxe. Os dos magnolios que foron medrando coa casa ocupados en frondosos quefaceres de perfume. O eucalipto do século XVIII, pioneiro en Galicia da súa especie, que vixía o arranque do paseo: 12 metros de altura á busca do ceo. E unha esfiañada cortina de 7 criptomerias serve de pano previo, ao horizonte.

Todas estas cousas poden dicirse das árbores que ao cabo no poden desmentilas nin queixarse. Cada unha delas mostra a súa personalidade peculiar sen sospeitalo. Rubiáns é, de feito, un museo vexetal vivo e puxante que se expande en alcanfores, araucarias *pifias* –con perdón–, árbores de coral e toda sorte de camelias venerables.

O parque participa da recia idiosincrasia da casa. Ás veces agreste, ás veces refinado, señorial sempre. Un trazado un tanto anárquico que respira permanencia no tempo e amplitude nos sendeiros. Sólidas sebes de buxo debuxan no chan estreliñas de sol. Saltonas, risoñas. Alegran o sobrio aroma a terra e musgo escuro que impregna os paseos. En torno ao estanque das ras o parque faise xardín e francés onde os haxa. Peixes de cores, xeranios gardenias e azaleas responden ao deseño do paisaxista Dorgambide ao tempo que unha avenida de viñedos alonga o xardín ata a horta; maceiras, limoeiros proporcionan á finca a prosaica pegada da terra.

A medias entre o rural e o señorío, Rubiáns respira consistencia.

Crocantes de tomiño

Ingredientes (4 persoas)

1 prego de pasta fío
1 dl de aceite de Arbequín
Sal afumado c/s
Pementa negra c/s
Flores de tomiño c/s

Elaboración

Estiramos a pasta fío enriba dunha placa de forno previamente empapada en aceite. Pintamos de aceite a parte superior, engadimos os ingredientes e metémolo no forno a 110ºC durante 10 minutos.

Xosé T. Cannas – Pepe Vieira (Sanxenxo, Pontevedra)

Salmonetes de roca con cachelos e os seus figadiños encebolados

Ingredientes (4 persoas)

4 salmonetes
200 g de patacas
1 cebola
Aceite de oliva
Sal

Elaboración

Empezamos limpando e fileteando ben os salmonetes tendo en conta que debemos reservar os figadiños. Cocemos as patacas e as cebolas en auga con sal e reservámolas. Salteamos os figadiños nun pouco de aceite de oliva e engadimos as lascas de cebola e os cachelos, que farán de acompañamento do peixe. Por último pasamos os salmonetes pola grella e dispoñemos todos os elementos no prato de forma harmónica.

José T. Cannas – Pepe Vieira (Sanxenxo, Pontevedra)

GALICIAN GARDENS

Summary

Galician gardens: another version of paradise 243
José María Bermejo

THE GARDENS
María Eugenia Ruiz de Azcárate

Quinteiro da Cruz 248
Oca 250
Pazo da Ribeira 252
Pegullal 254
Trasouto 256
Pazo de la Golpelleira 258
El jardín de Esperante 260
Fefiñanes 262
Sigrás 264
Jaz 268
Santa Cruz de Ribadulla 270
Rubianes 272

THE RECIPES

Caldo gallego 249
Crunchy sardine, cured sausage and foie pie 249
Manuel Chaves

Spider crab and sea urchin cake 251
Grouper fillets with the beans and Galician *ajada* 251
Eduardo Pardo

Grilled monkfish, creamed rice with octopus and octopus carpaccio 253
Spider crab salad, tomato jelly and cornbread 253
Xoan Crujeiras

Gazpacho, watermelon sorbet and king prawns marinated in lemon vervain 255
Tuna chunks on cream of *marmitako* and vegetable mosaic 255
Miguel A. Campos

Marinated tuna 257
Veal sweetbread, grapes and San Simón cheese 257
Rafael Centeno

Venison roll, cream of turnip and Pedro Ximénez sauce 259
Partridge in pickling brine with roast potatoes and milk cap vinaigrette 259
Héctor López

Kinder tomato 261
Salmon, seaweed, herbs and pickles 261
Marcelo Tejedor

Toasted pig's head with cream of pumpkin and soy sauce 263
Octopus with cream of pepper and mussels with basil 265
Javier González

Oysters with lemon and ginger emulsion 267
Requesón das Neves and tomato salad 267
Pepe Solla

Toast with boiled ham, Padrón peppers and Arzúa cheese 269
Roast scallops with seasonal mushrooms and pickled pumpkin 269
Javier Rodríguez «Taki»

Thyme crunchies 271
Red mullet with turnip greens and mullet liver and onions 271
Xose T. Cannas

Galician gardens
another version of paradise

Gardens, those leafy microcosms, with their mutable fragility and their unceasing vitality, fill us with nostalgia for our lost Eden. Gardens represent both nature and culture, and this is why the Florence Charter (1982) defined the historical garden as a "living monument"; a monument not only to the natural features of a garden – the plants that bloom, sprout and in their annual cycle, the passing of time and the gradations of light that change a garden's appearance from one moment to the next – but also to the enormous creativity that humans have invested in them. In a way, a garden is like a dream that has become physically manifested in the form of water, sky, plants, colour, sound, fragrance, flavour, soil, rock and memory. However, at the same time, a garden expresses a specific personality – that of the space on which it has been built, and the culture from which it has sprung. This book deals with the gardens of Galicia, green spaces that are often linked with *pazos*: their history, their architecture, their social and economic structure and their identity, which is simultaneously ambiguous and definite. And they are, of course, set in what is considered a mythical landscape.

The green countryside and the silvery sea are what define Galicia, a land revived by the constant presence of water, by a sky that changes from a canopy of mist and feathery rainfall to the deepest blue. From the mountainous inland area, furrowed by a thousand rivers, to the gentle coastline of the Rias Baixas and the Mariñas, or the abrupt cliffs of the Costa da Morte, Galicia is a land that is green, temperate and rainy, a land marked by the power of nature. Galician geography is defined by lowlands with valleys and coasts, gentle river estuaries, leading up to undulating mountains and mighty sierras. Over the centuries, the granite relief has been moulded by the sea, the rivers and rainfall, while the Atlantic landscape has been marked, in turn, by intense human activity.

Galicia's geography – which is rough but the same time gentle, with numerous microclimates – and the temperate, rainy climate have helped to create a land filled with small, scattered villages that coexist alongside each other, as well as a world that has its own specific language – one which has produced great tales and legends – and a culture with deep magical and religious roots.

To a great extent, these values have persisted in spite of the dizzying process of social change (a process that is inevitable and even necessary, though at the same time contradictory) which has meant that a balance has had to be struck between the self-absorbed Galicia and the Galicia that is open to the world outside. The autochthonous architecture and the very landscape are two particularly sensitive elements that express the "to be or not to be" of Galician identity. Popular architecture, which has developed as a result of the geo-climatic and socio-cultural conditions, has survived in the form of dwellings and other typically Galician constructions, such as *pallozas, hórreos, muiños, fornos, pesqueiras, pombais, telleiras, alvarizas, palleiras* and *alpendres*. The marvellous structural variety reveals the intuitive talent of this "architecture without architects"; a building style that combines maximum functionality with complete integration into the landscape. On another level - and based on the same values of functionality and suitability to the physical environment - the *pazos* represent one of the most important settings for Galicia's cultural heritage, and not only because of their architectural typology, which combines the actual house and its auxiliary buildings (such as *adegas, hórreos, fallados, tullas, alpendres, cabazos, invernadorios* and *muiños*), but also because of their gardens, parks and agricultural land, which is home to the country's botanical wealth, whether in the form of indigenous or imported species.

The culture of the *pazos*, which reached its zenith in the 18th century, has its origin in the old manor estates and is an

extension of the "big house", or the "house-fortress". Ana Pereira Molares gives the following definition for a *pazo*: "A Galician nobleman's house, built in the countryside, possessing heraldic emblems, luxurious in proportions and features, very much superior to the normal dwelling in the area in which it stands; not always but very frequently, *pazos* have a main gate decorated with the family coat of arms, a chapel, dovecote and gardens, as well as other features. Chronologically it belongs to the 17th and 18th centuries, though some *pazos* are older, but have received structural additions in later periods."

The word *pazo*, which derives from the Latin word *palatium*, suggests the stately, residential nature of the structure, though in many cases the owners were also farmers, which explains the architectural combination of residence and auxiliary structures, all of which revolved around a self-sufficient economy. As for the actual land, the area closest to the mansion or "big house" was often gardens, while the rest of the land was agricultural, divided into vineyards, orchards, pastureland and woodland. In spite of its etymology, the *pazo* shunned all forms of architectural pretension, and the few decorations the buildings have – such as arcades and terraces – were introduced more for the purpose of maximising the amount of light and sunshine the house could receive rather than as a form of ostentation. These stately homes often have a number of specific features in common, such as thick walls, large exterior stairways, generously-sized chimneys (sometimes with sundials on) and, particularly, the heraldic shield of the family. These could be seen in the middle of the façade, over the main gate, in the chapel, on the fountains, on the walls that mark the limits of the estates, and were sometimes even carved on the trees. The end result is that the architecture and landscape form an indivisible whole, an idea that is expressed in the popular saying, "dovecote, chapel and cypress – it is a *pazo*". The building's origin can be traced back to Roman villas, defensive towers and mediaeval palaces, while later influences came from rural and monastic architecture, Italian Renaissance villas and Baroque palaces. Ángel del Campo summarises the typology of the *pazos* into four basic categories: 1) a large house built between towers of medieval origin with rear wings that contain a general purpose courtyard (for example, Vista Alegre, in Villagarcía, Pontevedra); 2) a U-shaped construction made up of three buildings, often with the family's coat of arms over the main gateway (for example, Villar de Ferreiros, in Santiago, La Coruña); 3) a building made up of two wings joined at right angles and framing a garden. The most outstanding example of this is the Pazo de Oca, near Estrada, in Pontevedra. It was completed in 1746, though the original building dated back to the 15th century; and 4) a large house built in one solid block (such as Bóveda, in Lugo, which also has a façade with arcade galleries dating from 1772).

Many of these houses shared a number of architectural features, including a rectangular ground plan, thick granite walls, two floors, a space between two supporting walls, chestnut plank flooring, colonnades on the ground floor and

galleries or balconies on the upper floor and hipped roofs without much in the way of projection. Last but not least, the typical *pazo* is surrounded by thick vegetation.

The vicissitudes of politics and social upheaval led to changes in the way these unique spaces were used, and even came to threaten their very survival. The *pazo* culture, with its light and shade, virtually died out in the early 19th century, when *pazos* became purely residential structures. However, part of the *pazo* heritage has survived – especially in terms of architecture and the landscape – and these should be preserved as an important legacy of Galicia's collective memory.

The gardens are one of the most evocative and fascinating features of Galician *pazos*, not just because of their originality and variety, but also because of the way they interrelate with the rural environment and its changing beauty; a relationship that is based on the passing of the seasons and the size, colours and shapes of the plants. These gardens are also characterised by the omnipresence of water, ornamental stonework features (such as ponds, fountains, waterfalls, statues, balustrades, staircases, *miradoiros* and *ceadores*) and, of course, the indigenous fauna. An abundance of birds fill these gardens with their joyous song, including sparrows, pied wagtails, blackbirds, magpies, crows, doves, pigeons, chaffinches, nightingales, European serins, coal tits, blue tits, Lapland buntings, swifts, swallows, woodpeckers and treecreepers. Butterflies zigzag their way through the flowerbeds like nervous fairies, while frogs croak and plop into dark, hidden pools. All creatures – both great and small – coexist happily in these gardens.

In their book *Monumental Trees in Galicia's Cultural Heritage*, Carlos Rodríguez Dacal and Jesús Izco praise the wonders of Galician woodland, including the "Avó de Chavín" (a eucalyptus almost 70 metres high) at Souto da Retorta (Viveiro) and the horse chestnuts at Costa and Pombairiños, in the Ourense region, the trunks of which measure almost 12 metres in circumference. Some trees are over 500 years old, such as the oak tree at the Pazo de Cartelos (Lugo), the horse chestnuts in the Bosque de Pombairiños (Ourense), and the *sobreira* at Balboa, in A Estrada (Pontevedra). Other curiosities include the hermaphrodite orange tree at the Pazo de Brandariz (Ortigueira, La Coruña). Meanwhile, in the 18th century, the priest Martín Sarmiento – a specialist in Galician flora – discovered many fascinating things about the trees of the region, such as the fact that when laurels were planted alongside lemon trees, the latter stayed green, leafy and productive for many more years.

Looking from the *pazos* in the Beiramar area (Vigo), you can just make out, through the foliage, the dancing light of the sea, with all its magical metamorphoses, halfway between the eternal and the ephemeral. The gardens of the *pazos* – which represent a refined evolution of the original orchards and vegetable gardens – are also reminiscent of the first interior gardens and the extensive vegetable gardens of the great Galician monasteries (Samos, Oseira, Sobrado dos Monxes and San Martín Pinario). *Pazo* gardens are varied in their design, in accordance with aspects such as location, climate, relief, space and use. Their inspiration includes influ-

ences from French gardens (more geometric in style) or English landscaping (freer and more natural), but they all have their own personality. In the opinion of José A. Martín Curty, *pazo* gardens are defined by four features: isolation, compartmentalisation, terracing and eclecticism. The green coastal landscape enhances the personality and beauty of these gardens which, frequently, surpass the actual dwelling in terms of elegance, with their majestic trees, such as Atlas cedars (*Cedrus Atlantica*), the local variety (*Cedrus Atlantica "glauca"*), Lebanon cedars (*Cedrus Libani*), Caucasian firs (*Abies nordmanniana*), Greek firs (*Abies cephalonica*), yew trees (*Taxus baccata*), Japanese wisteria (*Criptomeria japonica*), Canary palms (*Phoenix canariensis*), Chile pines (*Araucaria heterophylla*), magnolias (*Magnolia grandiflora*), silver limes (*Tilia tomentosa*) and London plane trees (*Platanus acerifolia*). Other unusual species include the common mauve rhododendron (*Rhododendrum ponticum*), the European privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*), the striking common oak (*Quercus robar*), the Sessile oak (*Quercus petrae*), the horse chestnut (*Castanea sativa* or *Castanea vulgaris*), the laurel (*Laurus nobilis*), the common cherrylaurel (*Purnas laurocerasus*), the tree strawberry (*Arbutus unedo*), the holly tree (*Ilex aquifolium*), the magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*), the European spindle tree (*Evonymus*), the mock orange (*Philadelphus coronarius*), the orange tree (*Citrus aurantius*), the lemon tree (*Citrus limon*), the weeping willow (*Salix babilonica*), the Guelder rose (*Vibernum opulus*), the hydrangea (*Hydrangea macrophylla*), the box (*Buxus semprevivens*, a species that is used to give structure to many gardens), and the camellia (*Camellia japonica*), the exotic queen of Galicia's gardens, and which has been baptised the "flower of the Rías Baixas", despite the fact that it thrives in many other areas along Galicia's Atlantic coast.

The sensation of "endless spring" that pervades Galicia, even during winter, can be explained by its dense foliage, as a result of the damp atmosphere and the many watercourses. But this is also due to the introduction of species that stay green all year round, or others which, as a result of deft interbreeding, bloom beautifully throughout the year. The deciduous trees and the abundant ivy also give a romantic touch to the autumn days. Located in the Pontevedra region of Ulla, the Pazo de Oca is known as "the Galician Versailles", and particularly because of its beautiful interior garden, which is invigorated (as is the entire *pazo*) by the tiny stream of Badoucos. Everything is a delight here, particularly from the box hedge borders, which gaze at their reflection in the ornamental pools or encircle the granite fountain, arranged in a highly original lobed shape. The pazo is also singular for its large channelled ria which splits into two beneath the bridge, the brilliance of its hydrangeas, the long avenue of lime trees, the house's white gallery, the old washing place, and the camellias, which scatter their petals in drifts across the pathways in winter. One of these camellias is over 100 years old and stands 15 metres tall. The Pazo de Mariñán (La Coruña), which looks over the Ria de Betanzos and the banks of the Mandeo, is another unique spot, with its entranceway lined with London plane trees (some of them up to 50 metres high), white chestnuts and eucalyptus trees, as well as its avenue of ancient camellias and spruces; meanwhile, in the heart of its Baroque garden, the box hedges are a masterpiece of ornamental topiary. Other singular plant species that flourish in the garden's salt sea air include tree strawberries, London plane trees, Portugal cypresses, black poplars and ash trees, while the secluded intimacy of the tiny garden by the jetty or "balcony" on the ria recalls the legend of the clandestine loves of Doña Constanza, daughter of the powerful Gómez Pérez das Mariñas.

Apart from the romantic touch that resulted from the late-19th century reconstruction of a 15th century building, the Pazo de Lourizán (also in the Pontevedra region) offers a pleasant surprise in the form of a huge forested area that harks back to the *pazo*'s original structure as a farm; it has clearly-differentiated spaces (garden, agricultural estate and nature park) that bring together forestry research, the art of garden design and its original natural state. This structure is repeated in other similar spaces, such as the Pazo de Ortigueira in Pontevedra (better known as Pazo de Santa Cruz de Ribadulla) and Castrelos in Vigo, which includes the Baroque *pazo* (now the Quiñones de León museum), the historical gardens (including a rose garden, a French garden and an English garden), a woodland area, a grove of trees and part of the Paseo de Lagares. In addition to its plant nursery, dovecote and auditorium, Castrelos is blessed with a number of other outstanding features, such as the wisteria at the entrance of the French garden and the Pradera del Té, the Paseo de Odriozola, with its double row of camellias and, once again, the energy-giving current of a small stream – the Lagares.

There are many other unique spots that deserve to be better known and more widely enjoyed, such as the public gardens of Possio, in Ourense, the historical-artistic garden of Padrón in the province of La Coruña and the Méndez Nuñez gardens in the capital itself. Others include A Ferradura, in Santiago de Compostela, and O Pasatempo in Betanzos, which is rich in flora from the Americas. It was designed in the early 20th century in accordance with Italian Renaissance

models (especially Bomarzo gardens), and with a dual intention: leisure and education.

The flowers of the camellias, rhododendrons, azaleas and acacias brighten up the relatively monochrome tones of winter, and they last until early spring, a time when there are few ornamental flower species in bloom. If I had to choose one flower as a symbol of the *pazo* gardens, it would have to be the camellia, for its beauty, its fragility and its romantic nature. Jesús Izco, who considers the flower "a gift from God", writes, "As for the competition between box and camellia, the latter wins hands down. This is easily comprehendible, given the great inequality between the two species in terms of foliage and flowers, and the camellia has the advantage in both cases. During autumn and winter, its large leaves shine lustrously with rainwater, as their crowns fill with flowers of all colours: red, pink, wine-red, violet or immaculate white, as well as different variegated varieties. The blooms multiply in many different shapes: full blooms, semi-double, double, peony and anemone. They stand out against the dark green crowns of the trees like little coloured lights, as a poet once wrote..."

The camellia was a relatively late arrival, as it was introduced into Galicia in the mid-19th century, after having been brought in from Portugal (where it had arrived from the East Indies). The camellia has not made much of an impact in Galician literature, though it is mentioned by Emilio Pardo Bazán, Curros, Pondal, Rosalía de Castro, Wenceslao Fernández Flórez, Ruibal and Álvaro Cunqueiro, who wrote *Laude da camelia*. Meanwhile, the delicate madrigal that Federico García Lorca wrote for Santiago de Compostela begins thus:

Chove en Santiago
meu doce amor.
Camellia branca do ar
brila entebrecida ao sol.

In Japanese poetry – especially in *haikus* – camellias are one of the most celebrated flowers. In one of his best-known poems, the poet Kyoshi (1874-1959) expresses beauty's fragility, or perhaps the dangers of fleeting perfection:

The camellia
in full bloom
has become rather ugly...
(Perhaps this is why it is customary to use a half-open camellia as a decoration for the tea ceremony)

The Pazo de Santa Cruz de Ribadulla professes to own the oldest examples of *Camellia japonica* in Galicia, an honour that has often been mistakenly granted to the "Oranda-Ko" in Castrelos, owing to its spectacular size. The crowning glory of the Pazo de Oca, meanwhile, is the *Camellia reticulata* "Captain Rawes", not only because of its spectacular blooms, but also because it is one of the oldest examples of its species in Europe. At the entrance of the Pazo de Torres-Agrelo (Redondela) there is a *Camellia sansaqua* that is 9 metres tall and with a circumference of 1.40 metres, while at Terraza de la Fuente there are two multi-trunk examples which are even taller (11.5 and 12 metres, respectively). The latter *pazo* is home to the "Barón de Soutelinho" variety, which is notable for its perfumed pink blooms. The gardens at the Castillo de Soutomaior, which were remodelled in 1982, also have a fabulous collection, though the Pazo Torre de Lama possesses the largest expanse of camellias in Europe, with around 400 varieties.

The value of these gardens, vegetable gardens, woods and pasturelands is enormous, in both material and spiritual terms. We should take good care of them and preserve them, not only for the spaces themselves, but for what they signify. Consider, for example, that in Galicia there are currently 404 threatened flora and fauna species, and that 59 of these are in danger of extinction. These include several varieties of dragonflies, the European freshwater turtle, the mountain hen and the bear; endangered plants, meanwhile, include the Armenia maritima, the mountain lily and the chrysanthemum).

The gardens of Galicia partly sprang out of the Baroque gardening trend that began in the 18th century, heavily influenced by the symmetry of Versailles, though the Galician versions also possess an unmistakable personality of their own, being capable of integrating (as in the case of Ortigueira) geometric styles and landscaping, artificial and natural features, and native and exotic flora. And the creativity of gardeners (who have often remained anonymous) has undeniably been stimulated by typically Galician phenomena such as the presence of water (whether visible or unseen), the autochthonous granite (aged by time and embellished by the organic greenness of lichens and moss) and, of course, the plants themselves. Because a garden is not only a matter of design; what is most important is the soul of the place, the air that brings it to life and makes it, in some way, unique.

José María Bermejo

Quinteiro da Cruz
a confusion of camellias

Every year, at the height of winter, Quinteiro da Cruz bursts into colour as large splashes of yellow, white and red illuminate the details of the foliage. This is a garden that cannot be fully appreciated at first sight, with its intricate maze of footpaths, stone stairways and little hidden places.

A veritable confusion of camellias hangs down from hedges that are as cold and delicate as the very light of winter. And the garden changes with the blooms, as they vary in colour and origin – at least 1,400 varieties, all slowly telling their stories and legends.

They have come from Vietnam, China and Japan; they become acclimatised and they settle here. A veritable feast of beauty and botany that is distributed through the estate by tall green walls which give way to the interior garden, decorated with niches adorned with flowers as if they were the walls of a lounge; it is a truly overwhelming space, and stands around six metres tall.

From that point on, the garden gradually descends, as the camellia hedges sketch out the shapes of little corners and paths. Though the overall layout is an old one, it has produced a completely new garden – proof if any were needed of the extraordinary exuberance of the soil. Quinteiro da Cruz is a true decorative nursery that every day unquestioningly accepts new plants. The estate is a shop window of camellias, rhododendrons and azaleas, all the way up to the edge of the forest, an autochthonous woodland area with pines and oak trees. No-one would guess that these luxuriant, fertile gardens are less than 30 years old. The entire estate has a carefully renovated appearance, with its fountains, benches and stone tables. Over there, the tropical touch of a monkey puzzle tree which is crowned by an airy crest of branches. In the undergrowth, a chapel that was rebuilt, stone by stone, from the remains of one from the 16th century gazes out across a panorama of vineyards. There is a picnic area covered by jasmines. The autumn blush of the hydrangeas. Two *hórreos* [traditional Galician granaries] and a *cruceiro* [stone cross] provide a Galician counterpoint to the estate which is, above all, a garden that is waiting.

Waiting for the camellias.

Caldo gallego

Ingredients

100 g potatoes
1 bunch of turnip greens
50 g of white beans
1 piece of chorizo
30 g lard
1/2 dl of virgin olive oil
200 g of belly pork
Cream
Water
Salt

Method

Place all the ingredients except for the chorizo and the belly pork in a pan with cold water (use twice the amount of the water needed to cover the ingredients). Bring to the boil and cook on a medium heat for one hour and 40 minutes. Meanwhile, take the chorizo and the belly pork, slice them finely with a meat slicer and then place in the oven at a low heat (120º C) until it is all crunchy. Once all the ingredients in the pan are boiled, set them aside and keep the resulting stock.

The next step is to make a puree, using the potatoes and a little olive oil, cream and some stock. Meanwhile, make another puree with the turnip greens, a little potato and some beans and set it aside.

Serving

Take a cocktail glass, and arrange the aperitif as follows: place a layer of the potato puree at the bottom, followed by a layer of the turnip greens puree, some white beans, and add the meat crunchies between the various layers. Finally, sprinkle a few drops of chorizo oil onto the beans and serve.

Crunchy sardine, cured sausage and foie pie

Ingredients

200 g of puff pastry
1 beaten egg
Water

The filling

1 onion
1/2 a chorizo
100 g of ham
100 g of bacon
1 dl of white wine (Albariño or Ribeiro)
8 baby sardines
2 roasted red peppers
100 g of duck foie gras

Method

Slice the puff pastry into the desired shape – either triangular, square or round – and place it on a baking tray. Paint on the beaten egg, bake for 20 minutes at 180º C and set it aside.

Then, roughly chop the onion and all the rest of the ingredients for the filling. Fry the onion until it is about to caramelise, add the rest of the ingredients to taste, cook with a little white wine and set aside.

Fillet and clean the sardines. Finally, bake the red pepper, peel it and mash it in its own oil.

Serving

Take a piece of puff pastry and slice it open. Fill it with the onion, the chorizo and the ham, and then add the other ingredients. Finally, put the baby sardines on top and place in the oven for two or three minutes until the sardines are cooked.

Finally, remove the baking tray from the oven, place a few slices of foie on top of the sardines and cover with the puff pastry lid. Serve and decorate with the pepper puree.

Oca
too beautiful to be described

Too beautiful to be described, the gardens at Pazo de Oca should always be seen from a carriage with liveried grooms drawn by six horses. Try it first in a golden carriage and then in a lacquered Landau, as this is the only way (wearing a wig and short britches to celebrate its early days, or a top hat for later years) you could prevent your appearance from jarring with the landscape.

The reality, however, is all about poetry; you have no choice but to surrender to it. The garden's three centuries of existence has covered the baroque, neoclassical and romantic periods, all of which coexist peaceably in the murmur of its fountains, in the blue-tinged air and in the brightness of its flowers.

There's no two ways about it – poetry insists on imposing itself here. It sits itself down and butts in wherever it wants. Poetry persists in sailing along the irrigation channels and harmonising with the cadence of the water; it's sentimental and slightly excessive, just like the water; it accompanies the box hedge snake that winds its way toward the dark heart of the maze. Poetry filters between the lime trees and crouches down behind the hedges. And in the end, it becomes majestic and formal in the ponds in which a visiting duck is paddling, completely overwhelmed by lyricism.

The bird has only just arrived, and you can tell – it moves slowly, contemplating everything around it in amazement: the island, the enormous hydrangea blooms, the Puente de las Truchas [Trout Bridge], and the cannons; it must be thinking about settling here.

The surroundings could not be any more elegant: a sky that is pure Tintoretto, balustrades made of an almost silvery granite, with stairways and statues. And there's the water flowing past, gently and placidly.

Now the garden takes on a Versailles-like tone – like a decorative orchard. It is a nursery in which box hedges and roses coexist peacefully alongside celery, cabbages and peppers, not to mention kiwi trees that date back to the 18th century and hundred year old vineyards. Meanwhile, a gaggle of geese greedily gobbling down apples gives the whole scene an intrinsically classical touch.

A bewildered frog is looking for the water. La Fuente del Teatro (The Fountain of Theatre) helps to give the setting even more atmosphere.

Pazo also possesses an alarming topiary: an alligator, a dragon: the heraldry of the house. They are watched over by the tallest *Camellia Japonica* in Europe, a plant that keeps blooming until springtime; that is the time of year when azaleas, fruit trees and camellias all come into bloom at the same time as the hydrangeas. Spring is also the time when the garden becomes clearer – the sun shines and burns off the wreaths of mist that enshroud it in winter – that uncertain gleam that evokes magic and legends.

Too beautiful to be described: a stone garden enwrapped in a watery membrane.

Spider crab and sea urchin cake

Ingredients (4 people)

500 g of spider crab meat
2 kg of sea urchin meat
500 g of hake
500 g of cream
400 g of tomato sauce
8 eggs
Salt
Pepper
Basil sprouts and peas

Method

Boil the spider crab meat and set aside. Open up the sea urchins, remove the meat and set it aside. Finally, boil the hake and also set its flesh aside, after de-boning it and removing the skin. Mix it all together carefully in a bowl and cook in a *bain Marie* in the oven for one hour.

Serving

Serve with a few basil sprouts and peas.

Grouper fillets with the beans and Galician *ajada*

Ingredients (4 people)

175g of grouper fillets
Runner beans
Ajada sauce
Salt
Pepper

Method

Slice the beans into sticks and boil them in plenty of salted water for two minutes, before immediately cooling them in iced water. Flash fry the grouper on the grill, then bake in the oven for four minutes at 170 º C. Meanwhile, sauté the beans, arrange on the plates and add the hot Galician *ajada* sauce.

Pazo da Ribeira
dangerous for a bad painter

Located in the valley of Barcia, the gardens at Pazo da Ribeira are without any doubt a danger for a bad painter.

Only a true artist would be capable of capturing on canvas the still beauty of the box trees, while the dark, glassy surface of the river Barcés would be an even greater challenge; this feature alone deserves to be the subject of a limpid watercolour.

The gardens were designed by Thieve, a Frenchman who arrived here in 1810 as a soldier and stayed on to work as a gardener. Despite their almost monastic structure, the gardens possess the undeniable air of 19th-century salon society, complete with a maze of box hedges and Empire-style stone benches (perhaps designed for short-stay visitors) that exist in perfect accord with the fountain. Madame Recamier would be in her element here, beneath the pale light of the camellias.

Monsieur Thieve also designed two other fountains that punctuate the length of the pathways.

The hedges and the paths lead to the pergola, which is dotted with fuchsia-coloured rhododendrons, white azaleas and variegated dahlias. In September, this space is swathed with a blue-and-white expanse of hydrangeas that contrasts with the red of the bamboo. There are also the aralias – black balls that ripen slowly until they resemble rosary beads lining a long avenue which goes off in search of the horizon. But Monsieur Thieve was unable to control the squirrels and the otters which, once they have wriggled through the gate, vanish quickly amidst the black bamboo, the oaks, the hazels, horse chestnuts, ash trees and the silvery poplars. When viewed from the bridge, this is a scene of perfect open riverside woodland.

When seen from Pazo da Ribeira.

Grilled monkfish, creamed rice with octopus and octopus carpaccio

Ingredients (4 people)

Grilled monkfish

Four 200 g monkfish fillets
Olive oil
Salt

Creamed rice with octopus

150 g of Arborio or Carnaroli rice
1/2 spoonful of De la Vera paprika coffee
2 chopped spring onions
2 chopped cloves of garlic
Olive oil
1/4 chopped red pepper
3/4 l of the water used for boiling the octopus
25 g of grated Parmesan
300 g of boiled, chopped octopus

Octopus carpaccio

1 octopus, between 2 and 3 kg in weight

Method

Grilled monkfish

Season the fish and brown on both sides in a pan. Set aside on a tray. Five minutes before serving, reheat in an oven at 165º C.

Creamed rice with octopus

Lightly fry the vegetables in two spoonfuls of olive oil on a low heat. Add the pepper, the boiled chopped octopus and the water that was used to boil the octopus. Boil and set aside.

Boil water in a saucepan and add the rice. Gradually add the octopus mixture. When the rice is ready, season and stir in the Parmesan.

Octopus carpaccio

Boil the octopus, then remove from the water and immediately slice up into tentacles. Take a cake mould and arrange the tentacles around the mould until it is filled. Leave pressed under a weight in the refrigerator for a minimum of six hours. When serving, slice thinly using an electric slicer.

Spider crab salad, tomato jelly and cornbread

Ingredients (4 people)

Spider crab salad

200 g of spider crab, boiled and flaked
100 g of chopped shallots or chives
1 chopped spring onion
1 spoonful of sherry vinegar coffee
Olive oil

Cornbread

Boroa bread (Galician cornbread)
2 dientes de ajo
Aceite de oliva

Tomato jelly

2 kgs of very ripe tomatoes
30g of sugar
Salt

Method

Spider crab salad

Mix all the ingredients together carefully and season to taste

Cornbread

Take a piece of *boroa* bread (Galician corn bread) and cut thin slices using an electric slicer. Lightly fry in oil with two cloves of garlic until they brown. Set aside on a piece of kitchen towel.

Tomato jelly

Slice the tomatoes into large chunks, season with salt and pepper and knead into a paste. Place the mixture in gauze and hang it over a receptacle so that it drains well, leaving a transparent liquid. Heat 1/2 litre of this tomato water and dissolve the jelly in it (two sheets of jelly for every 1/2 litre). Finally, leave to cool.

Pegullal
Euripides in the garden

In the depths of tropical Galicia, on the banks of the river Miño, the gardens of Pazo de Pegullal are laid out in geometrical fashion, though the design is promptly camouflaged by the exuberant vegetation. In this setting, which seems to have come out of an ancient engraving, visitors are encouraged to dwell upon the transcendental side of life, amidst the box woodland and hidden nooks and crannies.

Explore the disturbing privacy of the maze: mysterious paths, half-hidden to the eye, help to bring on a reflective mood. Philosophy amongst the foliage – Euripides would be in his element here.

Pegullal evokes the very best of the old world; while its design is typically Italian Renaissance, it also seeks the balance of classicism. The gardens run from one side of the house to the other without losing any of their synchrony.

Impeccable hedges and ponds stretch out, in contrast to the irregular façade. When viewed as a whole, the scene transmits a serenity that is anything but static, and it is the garden itself that prevents that from happening, thanks to the magnolias, the gardenias and the wisteria that blush red in April. Then there are the thousands of sparks of light that gambol in the fountains, and the echoes of water spurting out of the gargoyles, all of which creates a succession of landscapes of perfumes, colours, shapes and sounds that cannot remain still for a moment. Every corner is transformed according to the whim of the day or the hour, sometimes outrageously, others discreetly. With shameless Mediterranean self-assurance, a fig tree that is shot through with sunlight raises its branches in a victory sign. At the very top, we can see a palm tree swaying. Quince, pomegranate and lemon trees pay no heed to the fact that St Benito is watching over them from his chapel. In fact, for the past 600 years, the saint has been jealously guarding his oak tree, threatening to ruin the health of anyone who dares to lop off the smallest branch. And he's been successful, as in this region at least, no-one has dared to do so.

Gazpacho, watermelon sorbet and king prawns marinated in lemon vervain

Ingredients (4 people)

The gazpacho

1 kg of ripe tomatoes
100g of green pepper
2 cloves of garlic
100 g of bread, previously soaked
4 spoons of virgin olive oil
Sherry vinegar to taste
Water
Salt

Watermelon sorbet

800 g of seedless watermelon
5 g of stabiliser
Glucose

Marinated king prawn

4 king prawn tails
Onion
Fennel
A few leaves of lemon vervain
Vinegar
Olive oil
Maldon salt

Method

The gazpacho

Beat all the ingredients – except for the water – in a blender. Add water if you prefer your gazpacho to be more liquid in consistency. Finally, add salt and vinegar.

Watermelon sorbet

Chop up all the ingredients and place them in a Pacojet-type tank. Leave the mixture for twelve hours, and then put it in the freezer for a further 24 hours. Finally, cook it in a turbine cooker.

Marinated king prawn

Cut the onion and fennel Julienne-style and add the vinegar, oil and lemon vervain leaves. Marinate the king prawn tails in the mixture for a few hours. Before serving, spike the prawns on a skewer and flash fry them on the griddle for four seconds each side. Finally, sprinkle on a little Maldon salt.

Tuna chunks on cream of *marmitako* and vegetable mosaic

Ingredients (4 people)

Tuna steak
Maldon salt

Marmitako

250 g of tuna pieces
150 g of potato
Paprika
1 bay leaf
1 choricero pepper
1 green pepper
Tuna *fumet*

Vegetable mosaic

80g of beans
80g of carrot
80g of green pepper
80g of red pepper

Method

Take a tuna steak and slice into four rectangular pieces weighing 140g each. Set aside the off-cuts for the *marmitako*.

Marmitako

All these ingredients will be used for making a *marmitako*, so chop them all up in small pieces. Sieve them using a fine sieve and add salt.

Vegetable mosaic

Roughly chop the four ingredients and sauté until they begin to sweat. Then, set them aside for serving.

Flash fry the tuna chunks on the griddle, but make sure they are served rare. Season with Maldon salt.

Trasouto
a garden of peace

The garden of San Lorenzo de Trasouto transcends botany – the least important aspects of the garden are the plants, and the box design in the cloister in the form of Santiago's shell and cross. Not even the garden's design matters, or the fountains. As befits the garden of an ancient monastery, it is a place for prayer and silence. It's a place that encourages whispering – you just can't raise your voice here. At least, you shouldn't. Even so, the water is disobedient.

The water, which sings out in three voices, spurts out into the fountain in fine streams with the clarity of a trumpet. You hear the exuberant splash of water into basins, as well as the babble of the fast-flowing irrigation channel. Because let us not forget that this is a vegetable garden, the part of the gardens that keeps their monastical soul intact. A soul that is a dwelling, but not a refuge; a soul that recharges itself with energy through silence, and regains the measure of things simply by strolling among the hedges. A profound, nostalgia-free tranquillity flows through this grid pattern that used to be a prosaic vegetable garden (let's face it, there's not much poetry in a pepper), though the sky does a lot to help, too.

And the garden transmits all of this, to the extent that by the time you leave, you'll feel ready to face anything.

Inside the garden you breathe a kind of greyness. The afternoon sun filters the light just enough to tinge the flowerbeds slightly blue. The silhouette of the beeches and fir trees against the sky resembles the foreshortened tower of a castle with ruined battlements and stairways. A shrine struggles to be seen among the huge date palms.

Unlikely little roses grow as delicately as puffs of air. It seems as if one glance would make them crumble to bits. There are dahlias, gardenias and a wild rose bush that has sprung forth from the landscape. Little by little, the trees are creating a lofty vaulting of branches that ends in intricate fringes. There is a smell of laurel leaves and lemon vervain. It was around this spot that they found a stone image of the Virgin Mary – from the 15th century, they say – which now presides over the cloister as a constant reminder of the eternal. The statue does not represent any of the virgins in particular – though she could be dubbed the Virgin of the Waters, as the statue inhabits an altar that is next to a fountain. She is accompanied by a few angels – plump and chubby, just like angels should be – who hide together with her, among the box hedges. Meanwhile, the water imperturbably plays out its concerto.

From the cloister to the chapel, Trasouto becomes a monument once again, and reaffirms its identity as a monastery. The light buries itself in the baroque altarpiece, while the trees wait patiently; they know that what is solemnised in the church is always celebrated in the garden.

The city of Santiago de Compostela stands before the gates of San Lorenzo de Trasouto.

Which is only to be expected.

Marinated tuna

Ingredients (4 people)

The peel of 2 oranges, 1 lemon and 1 lime
1 piece of tuna
Red lettuce
Spring onions
Sherry vinegar
Extra virgin olive oil (Arbosana)
Sea salt
Lemon leaves
1 clove
Peppers, etc.

Method

Wash the orange, lemon and lime peel well and dehydrate, then crush into a powder. Make an infusion (65º C) with the spring onions, the clove, etc. Now remove the skin and bones from the tuna, which should divide into four pieces. Place them in the orange, lemon and lime skin powder with salt for one hour. After that, clean and marinate them in the aromatised oil (after it has been strained and cooled) for a minimum of 36 hours.

Serving

Slice the fish pieces into squares (2 x 2 cm each) and arrange on a plate with the red lettuce, after dressing it with the oil from the marinade and the sherry vinegar.

Veal sweetbread, grapes and San Simón cheese

Ingredients (4 people)

Veal sweetbread
Grapes
$^1/_4$ l of milk
$^1/_2$ l of cream
Peel of smoked cheese
One 80 g piece of cheese
Traditional-style veal stock
Salt

Method

Blanch the sweetbreads and remove the skin, then add to the stock for approximately 50 minutes (depending on size) and boil at 75 º C. Then beat (in a vacuum, if preferred) and set aside. After that, remove the pips and skin from the grapes. Make an infusion from the cheese peel with the milk and cream until achieving the desired taste. Strain and mash together with the piece of cheese and add salt. Strain once again and pour the mixture into a siphon to keep it hot.

Then, flash fry the sweetbreads on a griddle and glaze them with the reduced veal juices.

Serving

Place a piece of cheese on a plate, together with the grapes. Arrange the sweetbreads on top with a few grains of salt.

Pazo de la Golpelleira
the cheerful atmosphere of the 1920s

The cheerful atmosphere of the roaring '20s lingers in the gardens of Pazo de la Golpelleira, as if no time had passed at all since then, and a number of carefree, elegant young people had simply been suspended in time, ready to suddenly materialise on a pathway with a tennis racquet in one hand and a ball in the other. The traffic in Villagarcía de Arosa would be completely out of context.

La Golpelleira has succeeded in preserving intact the spirit of the summer villas of that time. A refined, comfortable air reigns over everything, as romantic nooks and corners soften – as much as they can – the strict design of the hedges, which are unmistakably French and classical in style. Neat gravel pathways wander off out of sight of the house. In the distance, a palm tree "in petticoats" presides over a rotunda with a distinctly Mediterranean personality – graceful and smiling, it oozes self possession. Of course, when seen from below, the tree could also be compared to an upside-down, half-open umbrella, but no – the shape of the palms at the top is decidedly petticoat-like. At its feet stand yuccas, lime trees and fig trees. The greenness has a lemony flavour to it, as a squirrel vanishes rapidly among the pines.

Tempting little orange balls brighten up the foliage.
They're bright, tiny and round – but they're bitter to the taste.

There's a mischievous mood afoot – idyllic, polished and elegant, just like in the illustrated magazines of yore.

Beyond that point, the garden becomes stricter and more rigid, though no less lovely. The sun varnishes the tiny box hedge leaves every day, painting them with nail polish. A cave of camellias forms a dark tunnel that blooms in winter, producing pinkish, reddish and white flowers; this is the famous *Alba Plena* variety that has won the *pazo* so many prizes. The flowerbeds are filled with clumps of petunias, some pink, some blue. A ring of hedges encircles a stone table with benches. Venerable rose bushes, magnolias and heliotropes peer through the windows of the house.

As it advances towards the estate, the garden gradually turns into a sort of "contained wilderness", with its pond in the shape of two teardrops. The riverbank's huge "Adam's ribs" will conceal any kind of shame – and even Eve, if necessary. Next to the clay tennis court – one of the first to be built in Galicia – a stone pedestal table once provided a rest area for the tennis players.

Ah, those long summers!

Venison roll, cream of turnip and Pedro Ximénez sauce

Ingredients

The venison roll

1 venison sirloin cut
1 onion
The white part of a leek
1 red pepper
2 cloves of garlic
1 carrot
1 l of chicken stock
1 dl of red wine
4 slices of pork fat
Olive oil
Salt

The cream of turnip

1 onion
2 cloves of garlic
20 g of butter
2 turnips
1 dl of cream
1 dl of vegetable stock
Olive oil

The Pedro Ximénez sauce

3 dl of Pedro Ximénez wine
The juices from cooking the venison
20 g of raisins

Method

The venison roll

Clean the venison well and slice uniformly into square pieces. Brown in a pan and set aside. Using the same oil, make a vegetable stock. Add red wine and reduce a little. Put in the venison, add a little chicken stock and leave to cook slowly.

When the venison is done, strain off the sauce and wrap the meat in lard, using cling film to keep it in place. Leave to cool with a weight on top.

The cream of turnip

Lightly fry the onion and the garlic in olive oil and a little butter. Cut the turnip into small pieces and add to the pan. When the turnip is done, add a little cream and vegetable stock. Mash and strain through a strainer.

The Pedro Ximénez sauce

Reduce the wine, then add a little venison stock and a few raisins.

Serving

Cut the venison into slices and flash fry them on the griddle until they are a little crunchy on the outside. Heat in the oven until hot all the way through. Heat up the cream of turnip and arrange next to the venison.

Dress with the Pedro Ximénez sauce.

Partridge in pickling brine with roast potatoes and milk cap vinaigrette

Ingredients

The partridges

4 partridges
1 l of chicken stock
3 dl of sherry vinegar
1 onion
2 cloves of garlic
1 lemon
Salt

The milk caps

200g of milk caps
50g of vinegar
100 g of water
100 g of virgin olive oil
Salt
Black pepper

The peppers

4 red peppers
1/2 dl of vinegar
2 dl of oil
4 slices of ham
Salt

Method

The partridges

Brown the partridges in a hot frying pan with a little oil, then remove and set aside. Now, lightly fry the onion and garlic in another pot. Then, add chicken stock, sherry vinegar and a lemon sliced into rings. Add the partridges and leave it all to cook on a low heat. When they are cooked, leave them to cool and de-bone and shred them.

The milk caps

Boil the milk caps in one part vinegar to two parts water. Add salt and black pepper to taste and leave to cool in the water in which they boiled. Then, chop up the milk caps and make a vinaigrette with virgin olive oil.

The peppers

Roast the peppers in the oven, then make the ham crunchies by placing them on a tray between two Silpat-type cloths in the oven at a low to medium heat.

Serving

Make a bed with the roast peppers on each plate, and then add alternating layers of crunchy ham and partridge. Finally, dress with the milk cap vinaigrette.

Esperante gardens
"just another member of the family"

Every time the gate is opened or closed, little blue bellflowers and thorn apple blooms (also bell-shaped) both call out the same message: "This garden is just another member of the family".

Some gardens are romantic, others are nostalgic, classical, strict, or simply perfect. The garden at Pazo de Esperante in Quembre is, above all, a cheerful garden; a setting that transmits a warmth that goes beyond happiness. A narrow stone stairway – like an intruder penetrating the courtyard of a castle – runs between the walls of a thick black-and-green box hedge. These tall hedges protect the privacy of the rest of the garden, the house and the estate, as if they were like an entrance hall. A few yellow marigolds smile a cheeky "Hello" from the middle of a flowerbed that acts as a passageway which breaks through the wall towards the blue of the horizon. The scent of a false jasmine waits on the stairway, ready to welcome guests.

The land that stretches out before the visitor's eyes surrenders itself unreservedly – though that doesn't mean it is without secrets. The garden runs down to the river in the form of colourful terraces. There are flowers of all tones and shades – pink, blue, white and yellow, as well as the purplish hint of a Japanese magnolia, still too small and weak to produce a few leaves to accompany the flower, though it is joined by a camellia from the same country. There are sweet peas, lilies, dahlias and many other plants, some with names, others anonymous, which grow in flowerpots and on low walls that snake off into the woodland.

Once you penetrate the forest, with its oaks, beeches, willows and horse chestnuts, the whole scene is illuminated by a greenish backlight. There are gold greens, dark greens and apple greens. The sun lights up the grass, plucking forth cheerful emeralds from it. The *hórreo* that has been converted into a playroom provides a Galician counterpoint to the two palm trees – one skinny, the other a chubbier specimen. The entire space boasts the carefully-created carelessness of an English garden. There are no strict lines, and roses and lavender grow wherever they can in an apparent British disorder. Meanwhile, a bougainvillea patiently ascends the wall of the *pazo*, a house that became a noble dwelling in 1512.

Kinder tomato

Ingredients (4 people)

4 tomatoes
1/2 l of tomato *orujo*
1 1/2 l of Modena vinegar
2 soup spoonfuls of tomato powder
30 g of hake *pil-pil*
1/2 clove of blanched garlic
3 dl of 0.2º Siurana olive oil for the *pil-pil*
8 cl for the seasoning
Maldon salt

Method

The orujo and vinegar infusion

Heat the *orujo* and vinegar to 65 º C. Add a spoonful of tomato powder, stirring it into the liquid until it dissolves. Then leave to cool.

The tomatoes

Blanch the tomatoes and then place them immediately in iced water. Now peel and dry well. Using a melon ball scoop, remove the liquid and seeds by making a hole in the base of each tomato. Set the liquid aside.

Impregnating the tomatoes

Place the tomatoes on the grill of a Gastrovac and add the cold *orujo* and vinegar infusion. Reduce to a vacuum for 15 minutes (at a pressure of 0.8 bar) and submerge the tomatoes in the liquid. Remove the air gradually so that they become well impregnated. Take out the tomatoes, strain them and set the infusion aside for later impregnations.

The tomato pil-pil

Using a food mixer, blend the hake *pil-pil*, together with the tomato liquid, a spoonful of powdered tomato and the blanched garlic clove. Mix it all together well, then gradually add the olive oil until you achieve a stable emulsion. Then put into a CO_2 siphon and leave to cool for an hour in the refrigerator.

Serving

Fill the tomatoes with the tomato *pil-pil* and arrange on the plates. Dress with Siurana extra olive oil and season with Maldon salt.

Salmon, seaweed, herbs and pickles

Ingredients (4 people)

Marinated salmon

300 g of Scottish salmon
20 g of sugar
300 g of sea salt
5 g of crushed pepper

Anise vinaigrette

20 g of sugar
5 cl of water
1 star anise seed
10 grains of anise
2 cl of rice vinegar
1 dehydrated tomato
Two spoonfuls of virgin olive oil
Salt

Pickled pepper

1 cucumber
1/2 l of apple vinegar
4 moss seaweed hearts from Ireland
4 large capers
Tarragon leaves
Violet basil leaves
Runner beans
Ginger pickles
Maldon salt

Method

Fillet the salmon and cover with a mixture of sugar, salt and pepper. Leave to marinade for twelve hours.

To make the vinaigrette, bring the water to the boil with the sugar. Remove from the heat and add the star anise seed and the grains of anise. Leave to cool and then add the rice vinegar, the (chopped) dehydrated tomato and the virgin olive oil, and set it all aside.

Boil the runner beans in water with salt, then cool in iced water. Strain and set aside.

Now, peel the cucumber, slice lengthwise, then cut each half into slices 1 cm thick.

Pour the apple vinegar into a bowl in the Gastrovac (or similar). Put the cucumber slices in the basket, close the lid and vacuum for 15 minutes. Then submerge the basket with the cucumber in the vinegar, and leave for a further 10 minutes. Gradually release the vacuum and remove the cucumber, which will now be pickled and impregnated with vinegar. Now boil the Irish moss seaweed for three minutes and cool in iced water and set aside.

Take a few tarragon and violet basil leaves. Slice the runner beans finely. Remove the salmon from the marinade, wash it well and dry it. Remove the skin with a knife and cut into 1 cm slices.

Serving

Put a teaspoonful of anis vinaigrette on each plate and arrange the salmon slices, the pickled cucumbers, the seaweed, the herbs, the capers, the beans and the pink ginger pickle. Finish off with a sprinkle of Maldon salt.

Fefiñanes
the magic forest

Behind the imposing walls of the Pazo de Fefiñanes there is a magic garden hiding. Dense with foliage, you leap in without a second thought, through the big gate that will only open half-way.

The thick perfume of honeysuckle hangs over the ancient ferns. The light buries itself in the branches of the trees. Long shadows drag themselves across the ground, restless and unsettled. The setting, which is filled with clicks, whispers and silences, brings the dawning realisation that in this space, time does not matter. It's gone. Or at least, it walks on tiptoes. There are palms, box hedges and oaks. A boulder of pinkish local granite lies in a corner, like a massive sleepy elephant covered with moss. Stone benches, light and shade; all that's missing is Alice and the White Rabbit.

It's hard to leave, to go back and open the gate once more, and bid farewell to the "magic forest", after having traversed the estate, with its vines and its dark water fountains, which are perhaps baroque in style, perhaps not (though magic plays no part in this – it's all down to time). Centuries of tireless streams of water have flowed down from beneath the stone cross, to become tempting dark mirrors. But if you manage to resist the allure of these twinkling watercourses, you can move on until you see the silhouette of the *pazo* behind the bridge. This bridge across the Camino Real, which makes the square unique, together with the church of San Benito and the 16th-century *pazo*, comprise one of the most beautiful monumental arrangements in Spain.

Fefiñanes should be visited just after the grape harvest, when the earth acquires the smell and colour of skin – a burnished ochrous aroma that is warm and intense like autumn light.

"All of this I will give you," said the Devil, when he tempted Christ, "except for Fefiñanes, Cambados and Santo Tomé".

The Devil's reluctance is quite understandable.

Toasted pig's head with cream of pumpkin and soy sauce

Ingredients (4 people)

1 smoked pig's head
40 g of sugar

Soy sauce reduction

$^1/_4$ l of soy sauce
30 g of sugar
30 g of glucose

Cream of pumpkin

100 g of pumpkin flesh
$^1/_2$ large onion
1 clove of garlic
1 dl of veal stock
35 g of butter
Salt
Pepper

Method

Soak and de-salt the pig's head for twelve hours. Then, wash, brush and boil it for three hours on a very low heat. After that, de-bone it while it is still hot and press it. Next, reduce the soy sauce with the sugar and glucose until it is approximately $^1/_5{}^{th}$ of its original volume.

For the cream of pumpkin, lightly fry the solid ingredients in the butter, add the stock and leave to boil until all the ingredients are soft. Then, mash, strain and season with salt and pepper.

Cover a chunk of pig's head with sugar and then dry-fry it in a non-stick frying pan. Finally, bake it in the oven for 20 minutes at 70º C.

Serving

Serve the pig's head with the cream of pumpkin and the soy sauce reduction.

Sigrás
a 200-year-old box hedge

On the levelled area in front of Pazo de Sigrás, there is a 200-year-old box hedge that flows impeccably and precisely along the flower beds. Not one single leaf is out of place, nor would it ever dare to grow beyond its limits. It is peaceful and orderly, within this Italian-style classical garden that climbs the hill towards the house. All the plants know their place perfectly – or at least, the ones that grow beneath the watchful coat of arms etched on the façade of the house. Andrades, Montenegros; don't even think about rebellion. As for the others – the camellias, the magnolias, the large grey fir tree and the chandelier-shaped pine that can all be found further down the hill towards the estate – they detest being subjected to so much symmetry. The Lebanon cedar, especially, is incapable of it. As is the Maritime pine, which the Galician government has declared a unique example of its kind, owing to its age and size.

In contrast, the laurel trees release their juicy aroma into the wind while lined up in strict formation, forming a kind of ceremonious avenue at the entrance of the estate.

Sigrás is a loyal exponent of the typical flora of the *pazos*. Researchers from the University of Santiago have even paid a visit here to catalogue the species. Rebellious, wild and refined, the garden maintains its spaces in a well-defined manner, though each has its own particular idiosyncrasy.

Behind the house, on an archaic, complicated path that goes up the mountain, a 15th-century arch contains a gate that is hidden by hydrangeas in August, and a stone stairway that is painted pink by camellias in winter. But all that remains of the tower that, in former times, must have ennobled the valley of Cela, is a chalice carved in stone, which was the emblem of the quarry. Apart from that, a dense forest of oaks and maples stand guard over a cork oak that is fatter every day.

Behind the well there are several agapanthuses in bloom – false lilies that don't fool anyone. Meanwhile, the horse chestnuts seem to shoot directly out of the ground as if they didn't have trunks. In all, this is a wild, almost savage place, which watches over and dominates the region laid out beneath it, leading off to the horizon.

Octopus with cream of pepper and mussels with basil

Ingredients (4 people)

The octopus

1 octopus
Paprika
Sea salt

The cream of pepper

1/2 kg of red peppers
50 g of butter
20 g of sugar
Salt

The mussels with basil

1/2 kg of mussels
1 dl of Monterrey white wine
5g of basil leaves

The garnish

4 small boiled potatoes
Two grilled spring onions sliced into strips

Method

Clean the octopus, blanch three times and boil until tender. Then leave to stand for approximately 20 minutes. Now, strain the octopus, cool and cut four chunks from the part closest to the head. Then set it all aside.

For the cream of pepper, cook the cleaned peppers in the butter and sugar for 30 minutes. Mash it into the liquid until it has the consistency of thin cream. Strain and set aside in a heated place.

Steam open the mussels with the wine, add the basil leaves, remove from the heat and leave to aromatise for two minutes.

Serving

Fry the octopus on the griddle for a while and then serve with pepper, the garnish, the mussels, paprika, basil and sea salt.

Jaz
the ambushed *pazo*

Ambushed behind its bougainvillea-and-ivy-covered façade, Pazo de Jaz looks out over a garden that penetrates the house, in the same way that the house is perfectly integrated with the garden. The myrtle hedges boast an infinite synchrony of colours: purples, browns, fiery red gladioli – they all make their way into the house, through the balcony, along the corridors, even through the gaps in the doors. The kitchen and the office, meanwhile, are decorated with a series of plant illustrations that are so real that they look as if they belong outside. Looking from anywhere in the house, the garden is invading through the windows which, in turn, light up the ivy, the bougainvillea and the shadowy yew trees.

There are large rocks arranged on the flower beds, which descend along an organised maze of pathways that run between magnolias, horse chestnuts, cedars and lemon trees. The benches and stone stairways are lined with moss; when seen from the house, it's a French garden design that couldn't be any more English, being simultaneously simple and austere. The regularity of the clumps of plants and trees contrasts with a confused mass of reeds, ferns and the occasional bluish note of an agapanthus. An African bamboo gives the arrangement an exotic counterpoint, while a tiny half-hidden statue of Neptune peers out from a niche in a box hedge. Far from the solemn severity of classical designs, at Jaz the overall sensation is one of happiness, a feeling that the *pazo* and the garden bestow upon each other, mutually.

Oysters with lemon and ginger emulsion

Ingredients (4 people)

4 large oysters
The juice of two lemons
1 hake head
1 clove of garlic
Reduced Modena vinegar
Fresh ginger
Olive oil
Salt

Method

Place the hake head in a vacuum bag with a little water and a splash of oil, seal and boil for 25 minutes at 100º C. Then strain and set aside.

Blend the garlic clove in a food mixer together with the lemon juice and the fish jelly. Season with salt and whisk with the oil until you obtain a mayonnaise-like texture.

Serving

Open the oysters carefully and draw a large teardrop of lemon emulsion on each plate. Around this, draw a line of vinegar, place the oyster on the emulsion and grate a little ginger on top using a Microplane-type grater.

Requesón das Neves and tomato salad

Ingredients (4 people)

4 small tomatoes
15 g of brown sugar
1 dl of olive oil
0.3 dl of soy sauce
1 bunch of young garlic
Requesón das Neves
Virgin olive oil
Sprigs of chives and beetroot
Apple vinegar
Wasabi
Salt
Pepper

Method

Carefully blanch the tomatoes and peel them. Place all the ingredients in a vacuum bag and boil for 15 minutes at 65º C. Then open the bag and sauté all the ingredients in a hot frying pan. Now cook in the oven at medium heat for 20 minutes, basting the ingredients every so often.

Remove the outer leaves from the young garlic and cut the tender hearts into thin strips. Place them in iced water for five minutes, then strain and set aside.

Serving

Mash the Requesón into a paste and serve into four separate bowls. On top of the cheese, place a tomato and the young garlic and chive salad mix. Dress with oil and vinegar, season with salt and pepper and serve.

Santa Cruz de Ribadulla

The distinguished camellias of Santa Cruz de Ribadulla inhabit a garden that is verging on jungle, and which becomes increasingly exuberant and Jurassic as it descends towards the river. The garden is populated with Ceylon ferns, the type that dinosaurs used to shelter beneath, and which now sprout rolled up, in the shape of the pilgrim's staff (perhaps in deference to Santiago). Gigantic sequoias and waterfalls help to evoke the prehistoric atmosphere. The oval leaves of the rubber plants watch over the entrance to a dark, magical vine alcove: it's like a dragon's cave, though its only tenant at the moment is a fountain. Inside, a tangle of climbing plants makes a common or garden vine post look as beautiful as a Bernini column, in what is undoubtedly a form of natural baroque. Thick layers of moss camouflage the taps on the gargoyle, as well as taking control of the rest of the garden, from the ponds to the wooden handrails on the bridges.

On a stone table lie the remains of the summer: flowers of all types, branches and a few loose leaves. Camellia buds and heads snapped off but still intact. Because the fact is, the camellia, being a noble flower, doesn't fracture into pieces when it dies: when it falls, it is all in one piece. As if they had decapitated it – an occupational hazard for the aristocracy. The 400,000 varieties that inhabit Ribadulla, which are as famous as the ancestry of the house, have brought fame to the *pazo*, as well as wise men such as Jovellanos, who was both distinguished by birth and educated. It was at this table, which was perhaps surrounded by the same improvised floral still life, in the same damp, gloomy setting, that he wrote a long memorandum, though he had in fact only come to get over a cold. And all that happened 200 years ago.

Tiny primroses and violets venture out to explore the spring. The green tones become emerald in colour, and the jungle turns into a more open forest area. The laurels, which smell of the bitter almonds they use to make cyanide, are no longer a reason for concern. Aged magnolias and fruit trees give way to the agricultural land which – for the family of the *pazo*, was just called "Ortigueira farm". On the other side of the house – and of the chapel which, according to the finest noble traditions, is always open – the famous "Carrera de los Olivos" flaunts its rough, twisted roots like a challenge to time.

Toast with boiled ham, Padrón peppers and Arzúa cheese

Ingredients

120 g of *boroa* bread (Galician cornbread)
125 g of boiled ham
12 large Padrón peppers
125 g of Arzúa cheese
Olive oil
Sea salt

Method

Cut the *boroa* bread into thin slices, and then make small bread discs using a round pasta cutter. Cut the ham into medium-thick slices and break up the cheese into small chunks.

Fry the peppers in lots of olive oil, remove from the pan and then season with sea salt. Sauté the bread discs on both sides in a frying pan with olive oil until they are nicely brown, and afterwards quickly sauté the ham.

Serving

On each bread disc, place thin layers of cheese, alternating with ham and top each one with a fried pepper. Serve three on each plate as an aperitif.

Roast scallops with seasonal mushrooms and pickled pumpkin

Ingredients (4 people)

4 large scallops
250 g of seasonal mushrooms (milk caps, *bolets*, etc.)
1 dl of meat juices
1 clove of garlic
Mild olive oil

Pickle mix

0.2 l of mild olive oil
0.05 l of wine vinegar
½ onion
1 clove of garlic
1 carrot
1 sprig of thyme
1 teaspoon full of sweet and sour paprika
1 egg
200 g of pumpkin flesh
Salt and pepper

Method

Clean the scallops and make square cuts on one side. Also clean the mushrooms and chop the garlic, onion and carrot finely.

Make the pickle mix by frying the onion, garlic and carrot. Remove the pan from the heat and add the sprig of thyme, the paprika and the vinegar, and mix it all well together.

Now, cut the pumpkin flesh into cubes and caramelise by cooking in the pickle mix for 15 minutes on a low heat (if possible, leave to stand for 24 hours afterwards). When the pickle mix has cooled, remove part of the liquid and some of the vegetables and mix it all with a food mixer, adding the egg as if you were making a mayonnaise. Add salt and pepper and dilute with water until you achieve the consistency of a thick sauce.

Sauté the mushrooms and the chopped garlic clove in oil and add a little of the meat juice. Quickly sauté the pumpkin cubes in a hot pan, followed by the clams (on both sides). Turn off the heat and dampen them with a little of the meat juice to glaze them.

Serving

On each plate, put a spoonful of mushrooms with a clam on top, a slash of whipped pickle sauce and arrange the pumpkin cubes around it.

Rubianes
10 trees and a lily pond

One could call Rubianes many things: historical, poetic or simply beautiful, and they would all be true. But the image that remains in the memory is that of a cluster of water lilies floating on the dark surface of a pond. Red, white and yellow, they offer themselves to the moon when they feel like it, or they just close up in the evenings. Nobody knows the why or the wherefore of it; it is simply a botanical enigma.

The *pazo* juts out between the trees with the arrogant simplicity of the house-fortress that it used to be in days gone by. A secular tradition transformed into foliage which is best expressed in the form of a dozen massive trees that stand as witnesses to the vicissitudes of the *pazo* and its lineage. The two magnolias that have grown up together with the house are permanently going about their perfumed business. Meanwhile, the 18th-century eucalyptus, a pioneer of its species in Galicia, stands guard at the beginning of the avenue: twelve metres in height, it grows in search of the sky. Finally, a ragged curtain of seven Japanese cedars hangs between us and the horizon.

You can call trees any name you like, because in the end, they can't argue or complain about it. But each tree unsuspectingly shows its particular personality. In fact, Rubianes is a living, breathing plant museum with an abundance of camphor laurels, Chile pines, myrtles and all manner of venerable camellias.

The park echoes the robust idiosyncrasy of the house: it's occasionally wild, sometimes refined, but always stately. The park has a rather anarchic layout that exudes permanence in time and spaciousness in its paths. Solid box hedges cast little specks of sunshine on the ground, cheering up the restrained aroma of earth and dark moss that impregnates the pathways. Around the frog pond, the park becomes a garden, and very French – the landscape gardener Dorgambide was responsible for the colourful fish, the geraniums, gardenias and azaleas. Meanwhile, an avenue of vines extends the garden as far as the orchard, where apple and lemon trees give the estate a workaday agricultural touch.

Caught halfway between the rural and the stately, Rubianes exudes consistency.

Thyme crunchies

Ingredients (4 people)

1 sheet of puff pastry
1 dl of Arbequina olive oil
Smoked salt
Black pepper
Thyme flowers

Method

Stretch out the puff pastry on a baking tray that has been liberally covered in oil. Using a brush, smear the top part with oil, add all the ingredients and bake in the oven for 10 minutes at 110º C.

Red mullet with turnip greens and mullet liver and onions

Ingredients (4 people)

4 red mullets
200g potatoes
1 onion
Olive oil
Salt

Method

Clean and fillet the mullets, setting aside the livers. Boil the potatoes and onions in salted water and set them aside. Slice the onions. Sauté the livers in a little olive oil and add the onion slices and the turnip greens, (this will be the side dish for the fish). Finally, grill the mullets for a couple of minutes on the griddle and arrange all the ingredients attractively on the plates.

ISBN 978-84-9785-246-3

Os textos e mais coas imaxes deste libro conséguese a «maridanza perfecta» entre a xardinaría e a gastronomía en Galicia. Por unha banda, a xardinaría é un dos elementos máis suxestivos e fascinantes dos pazos galegos: non só pola súa orixinalidade e variedade, senón tamén pola relación coa paisaxe e a súa beleza cambiante, sen esquecer a presenza da auga e os elementos ornamentais de pedra labrada (estanques, fontes, fervenzas, estatuas, balaustradas, escalinatas, miradoiros, ceadores, etc.). Por outra banda, unha selección moi coidada de cociñeiros galegos establece, a través das súas receitas, unha variedade extraordinaria de combinacións de cores, de aromas e de gustos que, dalgún xeito, se identifican coa inmensa variedade da «paleta» estética que ofrecen os xardíns e a vexetación en Galicia.

LUNWERG EDITORES

XUNTA DE GALICIA
CONSELLERÍA DE INNOVACIÓN E INDUSTRIA

TURGALICIA
Dirección Xeral de Turismo

*M1-ASX-923